FROM SHADOWS and SYMBOLS to the TRUTH
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The Emperor Francis Joseph as Grand Master of the Order of the Golden Fleece

Portrait by H. v. Angeli

FRANCIS JOSEPH

Emperor of Austria—King of Hungary

BY

EUGENE BAGGER

Ducunt fata volentem,
nolentem trahunt.
SENECA

With 56 Illustrations

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To

E. St. J. G.

PREFACE

The collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire is perhaps the most fateful and irrevocable result of the Great War. Not quite a decade has passed since the tragicomedy of Versailles, and Germany is a great power once more; so is Russia; the epochal rivalries have shifted ground, but not abated in intensity, while their potential dangers have probably increased. But the Empire of the Habsburgs seems to have vanished for ever.

The dismemberment of Austria-Hungary in the sacred name of national self-determination has been hailed as a boon. In the sense that it was inevitable, it *is* a boon; for in politics the obstruction of the inevitable is one of the greatest of evils: its wages are war and revolution. This book is, in one of its aspects, an attempt to re-interpret, in the terms of the life and character of a single individual, strategically placed in a position of unique power, the inevitability of what was perhaps the greatest political catastrophe of modern times: the downfall of the ancient Empire of Habsburg, last heir of Charlemagne.

The political and economic union of the Danubian peoples was one of the oldest facts of European polity. It antedated the rise of Habsburg: it first crystallized in the great dynastic combinations, Angevin and Jagellon, of the fourteenth century. For a system which through

half a millennium managed to survive endless internal difficulties and endless external attacks, and re-emerged, a weary but imperturbable phœnix, after each of a series of upheavals that had seemed to threaten its existence, there must have obtained some profound predetermining necessity, be it of a purely realistic—geographic, economic, and social—nature, as the partisans of historic materialism propose, or some deep, intangible, quasi-metaphysical cohesion influenced by and in its turn influencing material needs, which to the present writer appears the more adequate explanation.

The realm of the Habsburgs, in its latest incarnation known, since 1867, as the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, was created by those needs and that cohesive force, *plus* the aspirations of a privileged line of men who from the middle of the thirteenth century onward had become, by one of those inscrutable accidents of Destiny which govern history, the bearers of the great Teutonic idea of Empire, that dream with two faces: one, the striving for the Universal Monarchy, the one earthly kingdom uniting all Christendom under one temporal ruler; the other, the immemorial longing of Northmen for the warm Southland with its unclouded skies and palms and cypresses and marble palaces set in eternal green atop white cliffs, and the azure sea glistening below: the dream of the Holy Roman Empire. To most people of these latter days the meaning of the Holy Roman Empire is summed up by the epigram according to which it was neither holy nor Roman, and not much of an Empire. That may be so; yet, if as a fact the Holy Roman Empire was weak and wan, as a fiction it was remarkably strong and tough: it lasted a thousand years. For the last six hundred of those thousand the Holy Roman Empire meant Habsburg. And for the

very last sixty-eight years of those six hundred, Habsburg meant Francis Joseph.

He was the last of the Cæsars. (The episodic figure of the kindly but absurd Charles, that twentieth-century Romulus Augustulus, may well be disregarded here.) For the prodigious span of sixty-eight years—a period exceeded in European annals by the reign of Louis XIV alone, and stretching across the administrations of seventeen out of twenty-eight Presidents of the United States[1]—it was given to him to initiate and to check the movements of an Empire including, at the time of his death, fifty-five millions of people. His life lay like a bridge across the nineteenth century, connecting the eighteenth with the twentieth; for in the year of his birth the white Bourbon banner still waved in France, and he died a few months before the Bolshevik revolution. Napoleon had been his uncle by marriage; as a baby he played on the knees of the King of Rome; and toward the end of his reign his submarines sank enemy Dreadnoughts and his airplanes bombarded enemy cities. Epochal changes in Europe, America, Asia, washed past him and left him unchanged: five times France shifted her form of government; Italy and Germany became united nations; our own country grew, from an insignificant cluster of recently freed colonies, hemmed in between the ocean and the wilderness, into the greatest power on earth: and he, who as a little boy had spoken to the men who, with their hair powdered, and wearing the lace *jabots* of the ancien régime, had broken the power of the Corsican usurper, in his life's evening signed the docu-

[1] Francis Joseph ascended the throne in President Polk's fourth year, and reigned through the terms of Presidents Taylor, Fillmore, Pierce, Buchanan, Lincoln, Johnson, Grant, Hayes, Garfield, Arthur, Cleveland, Benjamin Harrison, McKinley, Roosevelt, Taft, and the first term of Woodrow Wilson.

ment that loosened the World War. The mere fact of his duration seemed to elevate him to the rank of a law of nature; and many years ere he died people believed that his passing was to herald Armageddon.

He saw himself as Cæsar; and toward the end he had forebodings that he would be the last of Cæsars. His will was not the only factor to determine the course of the Austro-Hungarian state; but, itself determined by the relentless facts of his inheritance, it had the power to choose, in given crises, from among the two or three prescribed possibilities. He himself was clearly aware of the choice only; in his prime, at any rate, he felt the limitations as a vague hostile presence, and even in his low moments had a sense of irritated omnipotence.

For a full understanding of what a person is it is not sufficient to inquire into what he does; it is necessary, also, to establish what he wants to seem. The purpose of the individual—be he Emperor or yokel—is to rule the world —*his* world. But his world resists; and he may attain his end only by adapting, in his consciousness, both the facts about himself and the facts of his world. It is a tremendous task; and the only people who are completely successful in performing it are called lunatics, and must be kept behind lock and key. For the normal being the struggle between individual aspiration and individual limitation takes the form of a compromise. The evolution of this compromise is called a person's history. Madmen refuse to compromise. They have no history.

I call the fiction whereby a person eventually achieves this compromise and solves the conflict between his primary assumptions and the contradicting facts of reality a person's *self-idol;* and it is the idea underlying this book that a person's self-idol is the most potent subjective

factor in moulding his life.[1] Francis Joseph's self-idol was Augustus Cæsar—omnipotent, omniscient, divine: and he lived in an age which battered with increasing violence upon the ramparts of imperial prerogative, and in the end battered them down.

Those who, with tastes educated by so much of recent memoirs and biographies, approach this book with mouths watering in anticipation of the Chinese eggs of freshly-exhumed scandal, are bound for disappointment. This book does not cater to their kind. It is undeniable that Francis Joseph possessed sex. It is equally undeniable that he belonged to that majority with whom sex is not of overwhelming importance—merely one of the main functions subservient to the purposes of self. He was certainly not faithful to his wife; as a young husband he played promiscuously with mistresses—not a very serious offence in his world. That he committed adultery was, as will be seen, a fateful fact; details of his philandering are utterly unimportant. Again, it is the biographer's none too pleasant duty to record the most painful feature of his married life: his responsibility, incapable of direct proof, supported by sufficient circumstantial evidence, for that early affliction of the Empress Elizabeth which drove a wedge, never completely removed, between them. But once more it is the fact alone that is significant; the less said of particulars the better.

I have deliberately declined to seek "intimate"

[1] While the term self-idol is mine, I claim no originality for the concept: it is embodied in several of those masterful records of human behaviour which today are being recognized as the most important and truest contributions to psychology: the great novels, from *Rouge et Noir* and *Madame Bovary* to *The Egoist* and *Lord Jim*. Indeed, the idea is akin to that formulated by Gaultier under the not altogether satisfactory label of *Bovarysme;* also, to what Ibsen, in *The Wild Duck,* calls vital lies.

sources. Speaking generally, and always allowing for exceptions, in the cases of historic personages recently dead they are apt to be worthless; for witnesses whose testimony would be both interesting and dependable do not, as a rule, talk. In any event the value of boudoir details in biography is greatly overestimated. Contrary to current belief, it is not in bedroom and bath that people's really important peculiarities are apt to manifest themselves most forcibly. It is where fewest people see us that we are like most to an astonishing degree. The jibe, "No man is a hero to his valet" is usually interpreted as a joke on the man. To me it seems to be a joke on the valet.

There is a charming old lady living in Vienna today who knows more about the strictly personal life of Francis Joseph than any other mortal. I respected her exclusive rights to her private memories, and did not approach her. What she might have told me would surely not have altered the essentials of the picture; but having listened to her would have placed me under an obligation that no decent person could repudiate. That Francis Joseph dipped his roll into his *café au lait;* and whether he put on carpet slippers after dinner, seems to me bare of interest. That he sent the Archduke Albrecht to extract a pledge of reticence from General Benedek, and having thus muzzled him had him broken on a moral wheel, seems to me highly important; and all the details are available in the archives and public libraries.

While all references are credited in an appendix, I wish to acknowledge my special indebtedness to two authors whose works I have extensively used in drawing my historical background. One is the late Dr. Heinrich Friedjung, whose exhaustive studies, "Oesterreich von

1848 bis 1860" and "Der Kampf um die Vorherrschaft in Deutschland," are the unsurpassable classics of Austrian history. The other is Professor Viktor Bibl of the University of Vienna, whose scholarly, spirited, and colourful account, "Der Zerfall Oesterreichs," has equally afforded invaluable assistance.

This is a book of interpretation, not of disclosures. I regard as my specific contribution its method, not its material. My plan was to build up the personality of Francis Joseph as an organic whole out of the fullest possible array of facts, not primarily to unearth new sources. Oddly enough, the eleven years that have lapsed since his death have so far failed to produce a standard biography of Francis Joseph; apart from an excellent but brief study in Dr. Friedjung's "Aufsätze" there does not exist even a serious estimate of his character. There exists, of course, a maze of printed references, both in the way of fact and comment; for the purposes of my method these were available as mere raw material in the same manner as unpublished authorities. The circumstance, in any event, seems to me worth noting that the first biography of the Emperor Francis Joseph is an American book.

As regards documentary material in manuscript, some of the most important groups, such as the papers of the Prince Schwarzenberg and Alexander Bach, have been exhausted by the researches of Dr. Friedjung; others, like the correspondence of the Archduchess Sophie, and most of the documents of the last twenty years, are not yet available to the student. Unlike their colleagues in Western countries, Austrian statesmen of the old school were of markedly unliterary tastes; with one or two exceptions none of them has published his reminiscences. This very fact mirrors one of Francis Joseph's outstand-

ing characteristics: for he selected for his servants men who, like himself, were contemptuous of, or at least indifferent to, public opinion as well as to the things of the mind and spirit in general.

Francis Joseph himself was the last person in the world to seek self-expression by written word. The vast bulk of state papers in his hand, preserved in the Austrian State Archives, pertain, practically without exception, to the routine of governmental or dynastic business; it is by their utterly impersonal, colourless matter-of-factness that they reveal the man. Matthew Arnold's saying about bad books applies to them: they are interesting as symptoms, not as works of art. For placing, in manuscript form, a comprehensive assortment of these papers at my disposal my thanks are due to Dr. Otto Ernst, of Vienna. The courtesy of Dr. Fritz Reinöhl of the Austrian State Archives has also been most helpful.

I wish also to thank my friend Mr. Ernest Lorsy, of Vienna, for several useful suggestions incorporated in the general texture of the book, and, in particular, for material used in Chapters XI, XVII, and XX.

To no source, published or unpublished, do I owe such flashes of intuitive insight into my subject as I do to my visits to the three places where Francis Joseph spent most of his life. I found, among the humdrum details of their arrangements, symbols of the first rank: sudden lights bursting for a moment with weird brilliance in concealed forgotten niches of the soul of the man who lived and worked there. While the Hofburg of Vienna and the summer palace at Schönbrunn have been taken over by the Austrian Federal Government and are open to visitors, the Imperial villa at Ischl, where Francis Joseph had spent more than eighty out of eighty-six summers, is still the property of the Habsburg-Lothringen family, and I

wish to express my appreciation to the present owner, the (former) Archduke Francis Salvator, son-in-law of the late Emperor, for his permission to spend a fruitful hour in the rooms that have been preserved exactly as they were when their imperial inhabitant left them for the last time on August 30, 1914.

No testimony of appreciation could overstate what I owe to the friendship of Mr. George Palmer Putnam. It was his unflagging faith in my fitness for writing this book, punctured by fits of despair as to my capacity for ever finishing it, that provided me with the strongest stimulus to overcome my innate reluctance from anything as final and irrevocable as a manuscript posted in a registered envelope. I may now confess that one of my most urgent reasons for completing this work was a malicious desire to rout his pessimistic forecasts; yet I have an idea that in this instance at least he does not mind at all being proved a bad prophet.

In conclusion of these remarks, introductory to a book studiously impersonal, I shall be, perhaps, excused for continuing, for another moment, on a personal note. To many readers my attitude to my subject may appear to be stiffened by a too stern insistence on bare justice; they may feel that my loveless impartiality to Emperor and his government gives the measure of my regards for his country and people. Of such notions I would fain disabuse them. Three years of my life—no inconsiderable portion of a problematic threescore and ten—are incorporated in this book. For three years my mind lived in close association with figures and scenes of the Austrian past—in an intimacy far more unmarred than may ever be attained in relation to growing and resistant

contemporaries. For those three years of wearying, sometimes despairing, effort I tapped fresh strength from contact with Austrian landscape—from the sights and sounds and fragrances of Austrian sky and Austrian earth. For the purposes of this book, I found, it was not enough to know Austria; I had to feel and live Austria, to absorb and assimilate its line and colour and rhythm. And in striving to make my own that which was foreign to by blood,[1] I penetrated, perhaps, nearer to its essence than many an unreflecting native son, wont to take for granted that which to me afforded endless surprised joys of discovery.

In brief: during and by my work I came to conceive for Austria an attachment that will not, perhaps, be apparent to the reader of no more than average discrimination from my treatment of its last great ruler. But then I beg the reader to consider that my very subject, as he will see, precluded my being engaged with some of the loveliest phases of Austrian life—music, and that charming capacity for enjoying sheer being which in its unusual combination of great innocence and great sophistication is so typically Austrian.

And, if Austrians, and friends of Austria, unwittingly evoking the profound religious logic of Marcion, resent the at least attempted justice of this essay as malignant and alien: malignant *because* alien: let them reflect that to its author the lovable figure of Maximilian of Mexico, foolish and glorious in his failure and his charm, in the immortal gesture of his brave futile death, is the true Austrian hero, and not Francis Joseph, totally un-Austrian in his cold purposeful pedantry, straining himself to death in a lifelong self-defeating drudge for security.

[1] Though born in Hungary, I had never been in Austria until 1923, when, as an American citizen, I first visited Vienna.

Yet the imprint of the hours spent in the company of Francis and Metternich, of Schwarzenberg, Kübeck and Bach, will fade ere long; even as I write this their slender archaic figures slowly recede into the dimming reaches of memory. But the noble swinging poise of Vienna baroque and the lavender-scented tenderness of Vienna Biedermeier will live in me; and so will live the glamour of Salzburg, tearful and smiling like a silvery andante by Mozart in stone and stucco, let into a unique setting of sky and rock and verdant life; and the sombre wall of firwood dropping sheer upon a stream-bed path beyond Mürzsteg; and the Wachau bedecked in the glittering white fireworks of apple blossom; and the immemorial darkgreen crystalline sadness of Hallstatt; and the pale turquoise dome of the sky welded by a border of iridescent yellow to the dark line of moist brown hills, and the faint regretful trembling of a star above a little whitewashed chapel at Mayerling.

EUGENE BAGGER.

SAINT-RAPHAËL
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FRANCIS JOSEPH

PART THE FIRST

THE SEED

CHAPTER I

THE GRANDFATHER

I

In the year 1784 the Emperor Joseph II paid a visit to Florence where his brother, Leopold, was reigning as Grand Duke. One of the principal objects of the Emperor's trip was to inspect his nephew and heir, sixteen-year-old Archduke Francis. The Emperor had had disconcerting news. He had asked the Archduke's tutor, Count Colloredo, for a "completely reliable characterization," and the brave nobleman reported that his pupil's most conspicuous traits were "much egotism, dissimulation, diffidence and suspicion," and that he loved to fritter away his time "on trifles and irrelevant things." The Emperor now could see for himself. "He seems to be lazy," he commented to Colloredo. "Yes, your Majesty," said the honest governor, "he *is* lazy, both in body and spirit. He is loath to take pains, and does not persist in any endeavour." "How does he behave toward his brothers?" inquired the Emperor. "On the whole well enough, but he is a stickler for precedence; he loves to tease them." "In whom does he confide?" "That would be hard to say, your Majesty. He is extremely distrustful."

Joseph was a relentless and methodical pursuer of truth. After a while he sat down and recorded his observations.

> "Francis is slow, hypocritical and indifferent, and exhibits few pronounced passions. Nevertheless, he seems to possess both energy and system. He knows a good deal for his age, both theoretically and practically. But it is all mechanical—taking dictation, as it were—no ideas, no style of his own, either in writing or in speech."

The Emperor supposed that the soft atmosphere of the Tuscan court was to blame, and decided to give Francis the benefit of a personally supervised education in the more bracing air of Vienna. A few months later Francis followed him to Vienna. He was quartered in a suite of rooms in the so-called Swiss Wing, the oldest tract of the palace, where once Ferdinand II, the strong dark Emperor of the Counter-Reformation, had resided. Those gloomy grey rooms overlooking a dull grey courtyard, just like the drilling grounds in a barracks, were to remain Francis's home for another half century.

For a nature which abhorred change above everything else the abrupt plunge from the easy life of the Florentine palace to the strict routine of Joseph's court must have been very painful indeed. The Emperor was an indefatigable worker and a stern disciplinarian. In his frail body burned the cold white flame of the intellectual passion of his century; he was relentless as only a humanitarian, fanatical as only a rationalist can be. He demanded the impossible from himself as well as from others. And he was anything but likable. He was sour, supercilious, didactic—verily, no congenial company for a lazy little egotist of seventeen whose principal aim in life was to avoid effort and inconvenience. Instead of imparting to his nephew his own spirit of unswerving duty and unstinting service, Joseph merely reinforced his inborn dissimulation and distrust. In his uncle's castle, with its atmos-

phere of a militarized Jansenist monastery, Francis withdrew himself like a crab into his shell, and watched the outside world in a prolonged sulk.

Joseph was not the man to be deterred by obvious failure. But he was angered. "All my educator's arts are wasted on him," he informed Colloredo. "At the first chance he turns into a clog, plants himself into the middle of the room, with a distracted mien, and arms and legs drooping, and he will stay like that until the morrow unless somebody gives him a good shake." He scolded Francis bitterly and often. The young man appeared contrite and promised "to do everything that His Majesty bade him to do."

It was no use.

> "His good will," Joseph later wrote to Colonel Manfredini, "which he seeks to prove by words and sometimes by a few deeds, does not flow from a recognition of his faults and an active desire to reform same, but is only an expedient wherewith to seal the mouths of his critics for a while and to avoid inconvenience and unpleasantness without effort. But he remains exactly as he was before."

By a whim of fate the nephew's character seemed to be purposely constructed as the exact negative of the uncle's. Egotism, evasion of inconveniences, hypocrisy, immovability, indecision—these were the deadly sins in the eyes of Joseph, fanatic of duty, service, and self-sacrifice, passionate seeker of truth, tireless innovator, man of lightning choices. He was a true son of the Enlightenment, disciple of the French philosophers and of Frederick of Prussia. He was a doctrinaire born in purple who threw all his personality and all his power into realizing his ideas regardless of cost and consequences, a des-

pot with the fixed purpose of making his peoples happy whether they liked it or not. He set out to remodel his vast Empire in accordance with the best thought of his age. By as many strokes of his pen he abolished the privileges of nobility and clergy, chattel serfdom, and the guild system; introduced equality before the law, complete liberty of religious exercise, free speech, free press and freedom of contract. These reforms, enacted overnight, aroused violent opposition on the part of the vested interests. Still louder was the storm of protest provoked by the Emperor's administrative innovations. The Habsburg Empire then included, beside Austria proper and Hungary, also most of Belgium, large areas on the upper Rhine and in Swabia, part of Northern Italy, and the newly-acquired Polish spoils. These countries differed widely in race, language, culture, historic tradition, manner and degree of self-government. They were now all hurled into the melting pot of Joseph's theory of the Perfect State, and were to emerge as a new Empire, centrally governed by a powerful bureaucratic machinery with the Emperor as directing brain, standardized, uniform, equalitarian, German.

It was a magnificent dream, the greatest attempt ever made by a European monarch to organize his Empire along the lines of a coherent philosophic system. But while Joseph's aims were admirable his methods were hopelessly wrong. He could not wait. "All big things are achieved by one stroke," he declared in his first manifesto, in glaring disregard of all historic experience. He may have felt that half-measures were the besetting sin of his clan; perhaps his brain developed rashness as an antitoxin to the benumbing inhibitions of his heritage. Also, he may have been spurred on by the insatiable appetites for life and action characteristic of consump-

tives. He insisted on seeing results immediately because he feared that he might not live to see them later on. "When I lay out a garden I do not sow seeds—I plant grown trees," he once told his critics.

What the "crowned revolutionist" failed to take into account was that history is not an artificial compound like a garden but a natural growth like a forest. He scorned the truth that peoples, like individuals, are not governed by reason and self-interest, but by instinct, custom and prejudice, and prefer to be wretched in their own way to being made happy in somebody else's.

He had ascended the throne in 1780. By 1790 revolt was rife from one end of his Empire to the other. Joseph, as the ally of Russia, joined his army encamped against Turkey. Suddenly he fell ill and died. On his deathbed he retracted all his decrees save those abolishing chattel serfdom and introducing religious liberty. From the North Sea to the Carpathians and Apennines his peoples rejoiced over the passing of the tyrant.

II

In the day-dreams of crown princes there is an ever-recurrent motif which is rather at odds with the spirit of neighbourly love. "When I become King I shall . . ." Between that "when" and the present there is at least one funeral. Monarchs are proverbially selfish; they are taught in their childhood to regard themselves as the prospective focus of the universe, to be installed as soon as the focus *pro tem.* has burnt out. How often Francis, squirming under broadsides of imperial sarcasm, must have thought, as he peered from under eyelids drooping with feigned penance into the sallow wrinkled face of the little man in his shabby green military coat, "Surely he

cannot live much longer." And once he was dead. . . . Well, there was father in between, and father was a strong healthy man, not like this wizened old maid of an uncle; but anyway, even *that* meant Freedom. . . . And afterward. . . . Why, the confounded old prig, he thought he knew everything better than anybody else, didn't he, just because his brain was stuffed full, like an old attic, with rot out of books written by dirty and starving nobodies who call themselves philosophers and illuminati and whatnot. A fine lot for an Emperor to consort and consult with! He swallowed their ideas hook, line and sinker, and now he wanted to change everything—make the World Perfect, he called it. He wanted to change *him*, too, didn't he, make *him* perfect, what?—in other words, just like himself—swollen-headed and sour of stomach, a spoiler of fun and protector of sinister quill-chewing criminals in garrets. Francis hated the very sound of the word Change; and he loathed books and all the low-born, ill-bred lot that wrote them. Just wait till *he* became Emperor—by Jove, *he* will not change anything—he will let things well enough alone and enjoy himself—and his chief enjoyment will be to lock up writers and thinkers and freemasons and all their unkempt, evil-smelling ilk.

His chance came unexpectedly soon. His father Leopold, who succeeded the childless Joseph, was carried away by a brief illness after a reign of bare two years. Francis was now twenty-four, and Roman Emperor. He had both his hands full, too. To be sure, Leopold had cleared up most of the mischief wrought by the Josephine reforms; by rescinding most of the obnoxious measures and restoring the privileges of the nobility he had pacified the mutinous provinces. But a much more terrible upheaval was threatening from the West. The

French Revolution seemed to throw the whole universe out of joint. The King of France, anointed lieutenant of God, was the prisoner of rebels and blasphemers in the Temple of Paris, and with him was imprisoned his Queen, Marie Antoinette, sister of the Emperors Joseph and Leopold, Francis's aunt. The streets of Paris gushed with the blood of slaughtered aristocrats. The sovereigns of Europe were rallying in a Holy War of revenge and prevention against the gory murderers in France. Francis, too, was to draw his sword—figuratively speaking, that is to say; for, in the literal sense, he disliked that form of exercise more intensely than any other. The armies of Austria were to take the field in defence of the sacred cause of Legitimacy.

Yet to send an army against the French Republic was only half the job. For wasn't the Revolution the work of those infamous philosophers and encyclopædists and freemasons who had ranked so high in the opinion of that old pedant Joseph? It was they and their like who, with their rubbish about Liberty and Equality and the Rights of Man, poisoned the minds of people and conspired to bring about the greatest crime in history. They did this partly out of sheer malice and lust of destruction, partly out of selfish motives of power and self-aggrandizement; they strove to uproot law and order and murder kings and nobles so that they might set up their own nefarious rule. And their scope was not limited to France, not by any means. They were everywhere—simply everywhere. You never could tell who was a Jacobin emissary and who was not. They undermined the whole structure of society, and prepared to ravage all countries just as they had ravaged France. Wherefore just as important as combating the foe abroad was to run him down and stamp him out at home. The instru-

ment of running him down and stamping him out was the Police.

In Francis's mind the business of government, which his uncle Joseph had so badly bungled by reading into it all sorts of doctrines and philosophies which had nothing to do with the case, was brought down to a few simple principles. Foremost among these was that there were Good Subjects and there were Bad Subjects. The aim of Bad Subjects was to ensnare the Good into badness, and then to seize and run the government. The right and duty of the Government was to prevent this, and to catch the Bad Subjects, every one of whom was, as likely as not, a Jacobin agent in the pay of France. Once a sufficient number of Bad Subjects was caught, the thing to do was to Constitute an Example. This was done by beheading the Bad Subjects aforesaid in the presence of as large a crowd of spectators as possible, and by subsequently impaling the heads thus procured on the city gates; which was supposed to frighten other Bad Subjects, still uncaught, into instantaneous goodness.

Among the numerous crazy and harmful innovations the Emperor Joseph had, obviously by inadvertence, hit upon an excellent one. He founded a Secret Police. In his lifetime the business of this organization was to watch plotting Jesuits and intriguing aristocrats and other enemies of Enlightened Despotism. But already Leopold turned it to better account by setting it on the trail of Jacobins. Even as a Crown Prince Francis, discerning the tremendous possibilities for the good of the Empire which was inherent in this new institution, had drawn up a memorandum suggesting measures for its improvement. Now, as Emperor, he set out to develop this particular arm of government with a whole-hearted zeal which doubtless surprised his late tutor Colloredo,

and which tended to prove that suspicion in him was stronger than sloth.

The agents of the Secret Police penetrated the entire texture of society and supervised every detail of public and private life. No action, no remark, no thought even could appear so harmless that one could feel quite sure that there was not Something Behind It. Everybody was assumed to be plotting to overthrow Law and Order and Throne and Altar unless he could clearly prove an alibi which, however, held good only until the next secret agent sniffed something that he did not like. All other departments of Government were allowed to drift along the best they could; for the Secret Police no effort and no money were spared.

The untiring efforts of this highly efficient body were well rewarded. Before long a tremendous Jacobin Conspiracy was unearthed. Scores of suspects, including a Roman Catholic abbot, several noblemen, high state officials, university professors and, of course, writers, were thrown into gaol. Wild rumours circulated as to the secret plans of the conspirators: they prepared to set Vienna on fire, blow up the Danube bridges, capture and murder the Emperor and proclaim the republic. The prisoners were charged with high treason and *lèse-majesté;* over a dozen were sentenced to death and beheaded, the rest imprisoned for life. To be sure, the actual evidence showed their high treason to consist in planting a "tree of freedom" in a forest, circulating copies of the French constitution, singing ditties that disparaged royalty and nobility, and more delicts of this order. But that was quite enough. The judges were instructed to constitute an example, and constitute an example they did.

The moral effect of the Great Jacobin Trial left nothing to be desired. Not only many of the bad sub-

jects, but also all of the good ones were thoroughly intimidated. They whispered to one another fearsome tales about the nightly wanderings of the executioner, about nameless corpses without heads found on the morrow under the city wall; after dark people shuddered in their homes at the slightest noise, thinking they just heard the clanking of the breastplates and sabres of the Imperial cuirassiers who were supposed to escort the hangman on his ghastly tours.

III

By and by the terror wave of the Great Jacobin Trial spent itself; but the systematic hunt for secret societies and their "ramifications" continued as the principal activity of the Franciscan régime. Officials had to take an oath every year affirming that they were not members of any masonic order. All citizens were forbidden to leave the country lest they might be contaminated with dangerous notions and import the contagion; passports to travel abroad were granted only in exceptional cases and on the best security. If three people stopped in the street to pass the time of the day somebody at once slunk around to watch them; if a few friends met in the same wineshop two evenings running an agent was sure to be supping at the next table and listening in; if a dozen students with their sweethearts staged a Sunday picnic in the woods, on Monday they were summoned to the police and ordered to explain what it was all about. The principle underlying these precautions was called Nipping the Evil in the Bud.

Next to secret associations books and newspapers were the principal source of danger. The importation of these poison carriers from abroad was prohibited outright; strict censorship was maintained to sterilize the

home product. The purity of the mails was insured by a special division called *cabinet noir* and charged with the task of opening and sifting all communications, a process supposed to be secret, but in reality known to all the world.

One of the most important duties of the Secret Police was keeping tab on the Emperor's brothers. Three of these, Charles, Joseph, and John, were infinitely superior to Francis both in intellect and character; and as Francis, who was no fool, realized this and saw how the three Archdukes, liberal and public-spirited, endeared themselves to the masses, his jealousy knew no bounds. Charles was one of the greatest generals of the age; he defeated Napoleon at Aspern and repeatedly rendered invaluable services to the Empire; he was the idol of the army and a favourite of the people of Vienna. All this was unpardonable. He was shadowed like a criminal, accused of plotting with the freemasons and the French, harassed and humiliated on every turn, and after the lost battle of Wagram summarily removed from command and dropped in disgrace.

The Archduke Joseph, Palatine of Hungary, had also served his brother's Government with distinction. He understood the psychology of the proud and excitable Hungarian nobles, and with his tactful statesmanship found the way out of many a crisis precipitated by the arrogant and unintelligent measures of the Vienna court. But he, too, committed the unforgivable mistake of becoming too popular. The Hungarians were devoted to him. Who knew but that he was playing his own little game? Fortunately he allowed himself to be caught in an indiscretion. Several of his letters to the brilliant and charming Empress Maria Ludovica were intercepted —not by the *cabinet noir*, for Joseph knew better than to

send his correspondence through the mails which, as Friedrich von Gentz aptly put it, were to be trusted only with letters that might, and should, be read by everybody; but by the Secret Police which trapped his special courier. There was nothing in these missives indicating anything beyond the warm intellectual comradeship of two fine upright human beings, and the patriotic apprehensions of Joseph over some stupid encroachments of his brother. But about the same time the Secret Police also seized some letters written by the Empress to her eldest stepson the Crown Prince Ferdinand and to a friend, a Countess Esterhazy, which showed that the ways of her august spouse both bored and irritated her. There was a frightful row. Although not the slightest evidence, nor even likelihood, appeared of illicit relations between his wife and his brother, Francis, magnificently oblivious of his own escapades with the dancer Vigano and sundry other ladies, assumed the rôle of the injured husband, forgave the Empress after reading out to her a list of all her sins and impressing upon her what a wretched creature she was, and forbade all further communications with Joseph. The Palatine, too, was severely disciplined; he could not be removed from his office to which he had been elected by the Hungarian diet, but he was overwhelmed with signs of Imperial disfavour.

Next was the Archduke John's turn. Of all the imperial brothers he had the worst character; for he was an inveterate *Aufklärist*, an avowed liberal, a patron of literature, a friend of the common people and member of various organizations tainted with masonry. He was prominent in the great German patriotic revival against Napoleon, and useful on this score, for he was the real moving spirit behind the heroic resistance of the Tyrolese in 1809. But with the collapse of that resistance his

usefulness was gone, too; worse still, his fervour made him positively dangerous; for a patriot was a man with ideas and a purpose, and therefore a potential rebel. What Francis needed was not heroes, but obedient subjects. In due course the Secret Police "got" John. They discovered that he headed a secret organization called Alpenbund. It was a body held together by the purest patriotic idealism; its members swore to shrink from no sacrifice in freeing the German nation from the foreign yoke. John's plan was to rouse all the Alpine peoples, from the shores of the Adriatic to the Danube and Rhine, in a great war of liberation against Napoleon; he would enlist the Swiss, too, and had assurances of British help, both financial and military. It was a grand heroic scheme, but the Government saw nothing in it but a conspiracy of liberal hotheads. It was charged that John was preparing to have himself proclaimed King of Rhaetia, a new state including the Alpine provinces of Austria and the German cantons of Switzerland. His fellow-conspirators were seized and sentenced to long terms in prison; the Archduke himself was summarily banished to the wilds of Styria, whence he never emerged in his brother's lifetime.

IV

While at home revolution was being nipped in the bud the Revolution was victorious on all the battlefields of Europe. Each successive peace treaty with France sliced off another segment of Austrian territory. The Empire's finances, never completely sound, were now in complete chaos; the peoples groaned under the burden of taxation while the bankers who advanced the expenses of Francis's yearly defeat grew rich. Industry and commerce were ruined not only by incessant warfare but also

by the maze of embargoes imposed in order to prevent the infiltration of foreign ideas incidental to brisk international traffic. Several of the highest officials in the State, as well as the Archdukes Charles, John and Rainer, warned the Emperor repeatedly and with growing emphasis against the dire consequences of his policy of spendthrift immovability enforced through police despotism, and predicted the dissolution of the Empire as the only alternative to thoroughgoing governmental and fiscal reforms. To say that Francis paid no heed to them at all would be untrue; for in most instances he instructed the Secret Police to keep closer watch on the inopportune counsellors.

All critics agreed that one of the gravest evils from which the Empire suffered was that there was at once too much and not enough government. The State Council, whose office would have been to determine large issues of policy and supervise the most important decisions of the various departments, occupied itself with utterly trivial matters—such as who shall be caretaker of the customs office at the village of Z, and whether M or N shall be appointed to the position of filing clerk at police headquarters in the town of X. Papers relating to matters of this order were submitted daily by the hundred to the Emperor, who also exacted frequent and elaborate reports on the general conduct, political sentiments, associations, and recreations when off duty, of thousands of subordinate officials. He read with great care everything that was submitted to him, and meticulously corrected errors of style and spelling, even though, as a malignant critic remarked, not all his corrections were improvements. Naturally, with preoccupations such as these, His Majesty had still less time left than the State Council to attend to really vital items of governmental

business. These were hurried through in a perfunctory manner. In so far as the Emperor paid any attention to them at all he disposed of them—and this was the most serious of all abuses—not in Council, not even in consultation with the minister in charge, but mostly in the privacy of his chamber, over the head of the responsible official. "I cannot rely on subordinates," he once told one of the most capable and conscientious of his ministers—the same Count Colloredo who years before, as his tutor, had expressed misgivings as to his distrustfulness and his passion for irrelevancies.

It may be that Francis spent such a lot of his precious time on trifles because he subconsciously realized his incompetence in the face of large problems of policy, and his furious appetite for detail meant partly a sop to his conscience, partly an outlet to his sense of power. In any event, the tendency for carrying personal government *à l'outrance* lay in the family. Philip II of Spain, the gloomy autocrat of the Great Armada, of the Holy Inquisition and of auto-da-fés, governed his vast realm from a secluded solitary room in his huge palace; and already scoffers began to call Francis, him of the coalition wars and the Secret Police and Jacobin trials, the vest-pocket edition of Philip.

There was an historic circumstance which encouraged the dynastic penchant. As elected Roman Emperor the Habsburg rulers had very little actual jurisdiction; each German Prince, from the King of Prussia down to the smallest landgrave, was a sovereign jealously on his guard against Imperial infringement. Such power as the Emperors had rested solely on their hereditary domains in Austria proper, Belgium, Swabia and Italy, and on the practically, though, up to the end of the XVIIth century not legally, hereditary kingdom of Hungary.

Some of these territories were not formally included in the Empire; they had been accumulated by the famous series of Habsburg marriages and were treated as family property. The Emperor ran them much as the lord of the manor runs his demesne. Indeed, a clever Minister summed up the situation adroitly when he said that Austria was not governed like a state, but managed like an estate.

If Francis did not realize the dire condition into which his régime allowed the monarchy to drift it was not for want of telling. After the disastrous peace of Lunéville, for instance, his brother Charles presented him with a crushing indictment of his sins. "Among all the enemies of Austria," the Archduke wrote, "none is more dangerous than its own government." The wars against France were waged without the slightest reference to the Empire's financial and military resources, to the actual international constellation, and to the results that could be expected in reason. This was contained in an official memorandum; in a confidential letter the Archduke supplemented his charges with a specific hint.

> "Things have reached the point," he declared, "where people begin to ascribe the indolence which leaves everything in its miserable state, the manifold delays whereby the most important affairs remain unsettled for years and are decided by the Emperor only when the changed situation has rendered the decision superfluous; the uncertainty, the perpetual wavering, the weakness evident from all measures, at home and abroad—where people begin to ascribe all this to the all-highest person of Your Majesty."

This was strong language; none but the most popular of Archdukes and the greatest of generals could afford

to use it. At last Francis was stirred. He decided to make a few changes. To begin with, a number of new branches of the *cabinet noir*, the postal division in charge of secretly examining private correspondence, were installed. Then, after the lapse of a few years, the provincial estates were provided with a new court-dress—scarlet swallowtail coat heavily embroidered in silver, with white pantaloons, and—great was the mercy of the Emperor—also with a new campaign uniform, blue with red facings. Also, the State Council, decayed into a byword, was abolished, and a State Conference was appointed, consisting of the heads of departments with the Emperor presiding. This body was to form that supreme central authority the lack of which had been bewailed by all critics as one of the most serious calamities. It was to deal with the most important matters of policy only, while affairs of detail were to be left to the discretion of the responsible ministers. It was an excellent body, harbinger of a new era in Austrian government. After the lapse of a few months it never met, and by and by the old State Council crept back into the void. The State Conference proved to be another expedient wherewith to seal the mouths of critics and to avoid inconveniences and unpleasantness without effort. In reality everything remained exactly as it had been before.

V

At the Regensburg Reichstag, held on August 1, 1806, the French envoy declared that the Emperor Napoleon, as protector of the Confederacy of the Rhine, no longer recognized the existence of the German Empire. Sixteen German sovereigns, practically all the important ones save the monarchs of Prussia, Hanover and Austria, were enrolled in that league of princes designed to fasten

the rule of the foreigner upon the German nation. Five days after the announcement Francis resigned the title of Roman Emperor, and styled himself henceforth Hereditary Emperor of Austria. He had assumed this title two years earlier, partly because he anticipated the disruption of the German Empire, partly in order to counter Napoleon's self-elevation to Emperor of the French by depriving the imperial title of its pretension to the over-lordship of Christendom. Nevertheless the loss of prestige involved in the lapse of the thousand-year-old title, heritage of Charlemagne, inflicted a heavier blow on the position of Austria than all the forfeitures of territory that preceded it.

Francis had an infallible recipe for bearing up under disaster. He punished the guilty ones. Defeats in the field were always due to the incapacity and criminal neglect of generals; bad treaties, to the stupidity and corruption of ministers. Thus examples were constituted to deter future commanders and statesmen from malfeasance.

The guilty ones in the disaster of 1809 which, through the peace of Vienna, reduced the Empire by one-third of its territory, were the Archduke Charles and the Count Stadion. Charles, who had won a splendid victory over Napoleon at Aspern but lost out at Wagram, was informed by his brother that he had now fully proved his incapacity to lead an army in the field, and was removed from command. Stadion, by far the most intelligent and liberal statesman that ever served Francis, was dismissed in a no less humiliating manner. But this time the responsibility for defeat was more widely diffused. It was not only the generalissimo and the foreign minister who had bungled the war; the entire Austrian people was to blame. The campaign of 1809 differed from its prede-

cessors in that the Emperor, listening to the wise counsel of the Archduke John, then still undisgraced, and Count Stadion, consented to wage it as a people's war. The great German national awakening, stirred up by the French Revolution and intensified by Napoleon's tyranny, was to be hitched to the state coach of Habsburg. But the mistakes and omissions of two decades, the effects of chronic maladministration and disorganization, could not be repaired overnight. The splendid *élan* of the German peoples was paralyzed by the governmental sins of the immediate past.

In a sense Francis was gratified. He had never trusted the people. The people was no good. He was now proved right. He was going to make the people pay.

The gallant Tyrolese, who had risen against the French and their Bavarian allies and had asserted themselves against desperate odds, were now left to their fate. Francis never moved a finger to rescue their heroic leader Andreas Hofer from death before a French firing squad. Indeed, Francis was not altogether displeased by the collapse of the Tyrolese revolt. True, the brave mountaineers were prepared to die to the last man fighting *his* battle; but still, were not the French and the Bavarians their lawful overlords, imposed upon the country by a peace treaty which he, the Emperor, himself had signed and thus endowed with divine sanction? The Tyrolese may have been rebels *for him;* they were rebels just the same, and thus deserving of punishment. Anyway, it was the doing of that confounded freemason, Brother John, who was, of course, playing his own game, just like Charles. For it remained no secret to Francis that Napoleon had thought of deposing him and placing the victor of Aspern on the Austrian throne.

Francis swam happily in a sea of grievances. His brothers were bad, his ministers were bad, his peoples were worst of all. They all had conspired to fool him; for a moment he believed their protestations of patriotism, of devotion unto death; but it was against his better judgment; and he was left in the lurch. They were to feel the scourge of his wrath.

Up to 1809 Francis's régime was despotic chiefly by its inertia. It crushed by dead weight; it sinned chiefly by omission. From 1809 onward it assumed a more aggressive character. Tyranny ceased to mean stagnation; it became militant reaction. The new dispensation was ushered in by the appointment of a young nobleman from the Rhineland to the post vacated by the dismissal of Stadion. His name was Clemens Wenzel Lothar Count Metternich.

CHAPTER II

THE MENTOR

I

THE Emperor Napoleon thought highly of the young Austrian ambassador at his court. "M. de Metternich," he said, "is by way of becoming a statesman. He tells lies very well indeed." Apparently Francis, too, was satisfied as to the abilities of his youthful envoy; for after three years' service at Paris, the Count, then thirty-six, was summoned to Vienna and appointed Foreign Minister. For the next thirty-nine years the history of Austria, and a good deal of the history of Europe, was the history of Metternich.

It has been the custom of historians, originating in the popular myth, and reinforcing it in its turn, to represent Metternich as the arch villain of the first half of the nineteenth century, author of the policies of reactionary despotism associated with the unholy memory of the Holy Alliance. According to this version Metternich was the real ruler of Austria, and Francis merely an anointed rubber stamp in his Chancellor's crafty hands. In his political testament, written shortly before his death in 1859, Metternich modestly declared that what people were wont to call his system was in truth nothing but the God-appointed order of the universe. As a matter of fact "the system" was the work neither of the unpretentious Chancellor nor of God to whom he paid

such a high tribute of flattery. That system had been created by the Emperor Francis in his own image. Metternich found it ready-made when he, in 1809, moved into the beautiful rococo palace on the Ballhausplatz.

All the traits which the keen eye of the great Emperor of the Enlightenment had discerned in the growing boy: his immovability, his boundless egotism, his suspicion, his aversion from effort, his refusal to consider unpleasant facts, his pettiness, his procrastination, his preoccupation with trifles, his jealousy—they were all there, petrified into formulas and practices of statesmanship. Metternich perfected the system, organized its symmetry, built in a few supports, repaired the machinery, repainted the fences—devise and construct it he did not.

To begin with, Metternich never really understood domestic administration; he lacked the sense and interest for it as well as experience, and he was contented with leaving this field to subordinates who might, and in one notable case did, develop into dangerous rivals. His own domain was diplomacy; and here he was unsurpassed. But when it is said that he was one of the greatest diplomats of the nineteenth century his limitations, too, are drawn. He was past master in carrying out, of "putting over," if you will, a set policy; where he failed utterly was in conceiving that policy in harmony with the requirements of his age. He had no understanding of and no sympathy for the masses which to him always remained "the rabble"; he had no perception of the currents of ideas that agitated his time. He regarded popular discontent and the cry for reforms as the effect of the nefarious activities of a few wicked and infatuated agitators, and held that left to themselves the people would be perfectly happy and delighted to entrust their destinies to the insight of their born rulers.

His outlook was narrow; but it was a narrowness due not to stupidity but to perverted cleverness, not to the lack of ideas but to their peculiar warp. He was, in the words of Grillparzer, greatest of Austrian poets and keenest of political satirists, the Don Quixote of Legitimacy who began by deceiving others and ended by deceiving himself. He went on repeating his own formulas until he came to believe that he was listening to the voice of history. He saw himself as a realist; had the word Realpolitik been invented in his days he would have considered himself as its foremost exponent. In truth he was a genuine son of his age, incurably romantic; he was fighting to bring back a golden past which existed chiefly in his own imagination, to restore a status quo of what ought to have been. He was a typical German idealist living in a world of his own construction with which the world of facts doggedly refused to conform. It was so much the worse for the world of facts; for this cynical dreamer, this reversed utopian, wielded such personal power as no other statesman of his century.

Scion of an old noble house of the Rhineland, Metternich rooted in that eighteenth century in which aristocrats were foremost among the patrons and promoters of enlightenment. He was born to grow up into a citizen of the world, a liberal and a skeptic. But he was barely twenty when he witnessed, at Mainz, the excesses of the revolutionary mob let loose by the advancing hosts of the French Republic. That experience stamped his whole life.

His case was typical. A new generation of noblemen matured, fanatically opposed to everything that smacked of revolution—fervent champions of the divine right of kings, of the privileges of their own class, of the omnipotence and omniscience of the Church. The old

Prince Kaunitz, who had been Maria Theresa's chancellor and one of the greatest statesmen of the eighteenth century, could still say that not all the fruits of the French Revolution were bad—that some of them were excellent. To young Metternich's contemporaries such tolerance seemed sheer blasphemy and high treason.

For the first time in history, conscious reaction, the programme of setting the hands of the clock back, as distinguished from mere conservatism, the policy of keeping things as they are, became the ruling political faith. The main theoretical props of this faith were two. The first was the discovery of a connection between the doctrines of enlightenment and political revolution.

> "Because some French writers had brilliantly set forth anti-ecclesiastical ideas about the Law of Nature and because the reformers of French finance did not hesitate to confiscate church property, the ruling classes thought that the real source of revolutionary tendencies was to be sought in the writings of the enlightened philosophers about religion."

Secondly, the upholders of things as they were proposed the thesis that it was the excessive willingness of the French King to yield to the people's demands which made possible the ultimate victory of the Revolution. From this it was concluded that the only way of successfully resisting revolution was to nip it in the bud by opposing the slightest demand for change.

This creed involved condemnation and reversal of the policies of the enlightened despots. It was a creed which admirably suited the character of Francis; it elevated his bitter antagonism to his uncle and his personal preferences into a political philosophy. It became, in Metter-

nich's hands, the spiritual foundation of the Holy Alliance.

II

By instinct and early upbringing a moderate liberal, Metternich turned conservative through reasoned conviction quickened by fear. He developed into a reactionary by self-interest. He had a fine, discriminating, alert mind, trained by the best education his age and birth could afford; he knew the world; above all, he had a lofty conception of the essential unity of Europe and of the necessity of an international, or, if you will, supernational organization which raises him high above the greedy particularism of Bismarck. He could not, try as he might, uproot his kinship with the great traditions of enlightenment. This supreme champion, this patron saint, of reaction remained at heart a progressive and a liberal. In the secret recesses of that well-hidden and well-guarded organ he knew that there was no use trying to dam the current of the times, to hold up the inevitable course of history. But he was vain, and lusting for power; withal, an egotist; there never has been a more consistent one, remarked somebody who knew him well. For thirty-nine years he ruled over Europe with an almost sovereign sway. But his position rested solely on the absolute confidence of Francis, and on his own ability to make himself indispensable to that monarch. He bought his hold over the Emperor at the price of his own soul. His mind was infinitely superior to that of the limited and sluggish Francis; but he placed it at the latter's disposal, in exchange for his tenure of power, as one would let a house or a horse for a consideration. And Francis not only used Metternich to carry out his own ideas, but he also made it appear that those ideas were Metternich's.

This was a most convenient arrangement; for, while Francis reaped the full benefit and glory of Metternich's results, the peoples cursed the Chancellor for all the abuses and encroachments of the Government. It was like one of those Dickensian partnerships where one member is the condensed milk of human kindness walking on legs, but is unable to keep any of his generous promises because the senior partner inside is such a beast. Thus it came about that Metternich has gone down to history as a byword for stupid and base tyranny, while Francis beamed upon the generations sweating blood in the straitjacket of his régime as a benevolent patriarch.

Thus at bottom the secret of Metternich's omnipotence was his lack of character. Metternich was far too clever not to realize this, but naturally he did not admit it. "The Emperor always does what I want him to do; but I always want him to do what he ought to," he used to say. The phrase was neatly turned and polished with the peculiar Metternichian suavity, to conceal the untruth in its core. "The Emperor always does what I want him to do, but I always want him to do what I know that he would like to": that sentence expresses more adequately the complicated relationship between master and servant, a relationship that, as will be seen, proved stronger than even death.

Metternich knew that the best way to maintain the existing order of things was to mend, gradually, its most glaring evils. But Francis would not hear of mending. Over and over again the Minister proposed moderate measures of reform, but as soon as the slightest displeasure was evident on the Emperor's part he quickly dropped his suggestions.

Thus in 1817 Metternich, who distrusted centraliza-

tion as a product of the French Revolution, proposed a federal organization for the Empire, based on the existing provincial units and calling for the co-operation of the estates. Francis put the memorandum, which contained some excellent ideas, into the drawer of his desk—a bottomless pit into which disappeared one after the other the opportunities of Austria.

Metternich's *mot* about Italy being a mere geographical expression is remembered, but it is forgotten that on the subject of Italian government, too, he originally entertained quite sensible views. He once warned Francis that "that most interesting part of the Empire," with its highly developed individuality, its ancient culture, and its sensitive population, must not be estranged by a treatment uniform to that of the German and Slav provinces, but should be won over by concessions to Italian sentiment and by governmental methods devised to fit its peculiar character. Now, uniformity of administration was one of Francis's obsessions, because it required no imaginative effort, and because a diversity adjusted to local needs would have implied recognition of the various peoples as separate entities. Metternich's wise warning went the way of all memoranda, and the Chancellor shrugged his mental shoulders and kept his peace.

In his deepest moments of self-searching Metternich was aware of the fatal hollowness of his own magnificence. To his diary he occasionally made cynical admissions. Once he remarked that it was extremely difficult to conduct a conservative policy in an Empire where there was nothing worth conserving. He did not believe in the future of Austria; time and again it flashed across his mind that his whole statesmanship concentrated on staving off, as long as possible, an inevitable end; and in the course of years he came to see the slow relentless approach

of what he strove to postpone but knew he could not avert. One of the paradoxes which clustered like dark crystals around his soul and covered up, but in rare moments of self-avowal helped to illumine, the unhealing rent in it, was that while he realized Time as *the* enemy in the long run, he considered it as an ally of his immediate purposes. This was but one facet of his boundless conceit; he felt that nobody could block indefinitely the natural trend of development yet he persuaded himself that provisionally *he* could do it—he and no one else. One of his mottoes was, "Time won, all won"—another temperamental link with his sovereign; but while Francis procrastinated because he disliked decision and effort, Metternich temporized because he felt that after him came the deluge.

But these doubts and these fears he did not confide to contemporaries. As against the world he wore unto the last his icy armour of self-assurance, omniscience, and irony. He had infinite contempt for those who dared to disagree with him; he firmly believed that they were fools with diseased brains and would die shortly. And, as physically he survived most of his enemies, Fate, more ironic than himself, and much more patient, lulled him to rest with a warm little song of self-justification.

III

With the Congress of Vienna Austria reached the zenith of its power. France had won all the battles. England had won the war. Austria won the peace. At least so it seemed for a moment which was to petrify into a generation. After his meteoric sally from Elba Napoleon was safe behind three thousand miles of water. Legitimacy was vindicated. The status quo was restored and entrenched.

Metternich saw himself as the master of the Continent. The Congress was his personal triumph. He was host to the most brilliant gathering of kings and princes and ambassadors ever assembled. He rocked himself on the mellow waves of a sea of power and pleasure. An unending sequence of banquets and balls and garden fêtes, illuminated by the glitter of candelabra and Chinese lanterns and gold lace and diamonds and the marble of feminine shoulders, formed a dazzling core of light which left convenient patches of shadow over the committee rooms where the fate of the world was being settled. Vienna became the central stage upon which hung the wistful and envious gaze of a whole world. Metternich had the double satisfaction of being the principal actor on the boards and principal *régisseur* off them.

All the threads of intrigue converged in his deft hands. His secret police kept unceasing watch over the waking and sleeping hours of all potentates and delegates. Not a word could be said, hardly a thought could be thought, but that Metternich knew. Most useful among the staff of his intelligence department were a number of beautiful and obliging ladies who spared no effort in keeping the representatives of the various powers in a cheerfully communicative mood.

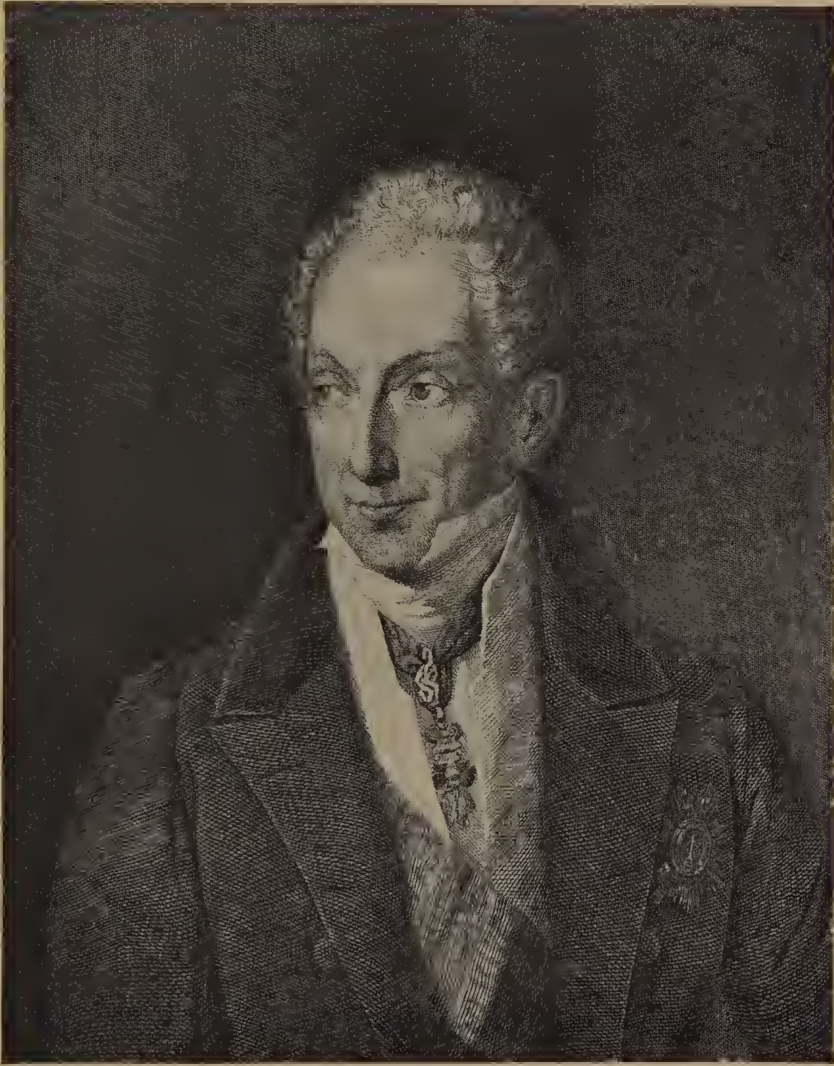
While kings and princes and ambassadors amused themselves Metternich, smiling and scintillating, got what he wanted. Austria not only recovered the provinces lost during the Napoleonic struggle, but in addition annexed the flourishing Lombardo-Venetian kingdom, at this time one of the wealthiest sections of Europe. Cadet branches of the House of Habsburg were restored to or established on the thrones of Tuscany, Parma and Modena. In this wise Austrian hegemony was fastened upon Italy.

The gains of the Empire, however, were measured

not only by its own acquisitions but also by the disappointments of its rivals. Russia had to disgorge parts of Poland which were shared by Austria and Prussia. The latter, in its turn, was thwarted in its ambition to lay hands on the entire Kingdom of Saxony whose dynasty was to be punished for its adherence to Napoleon. The annexation of Saxony was vital to Prussia because the Wettin domains separated its eastern part, Brandenburg and Prussia proper, from its Rhenish possessions in the West. Metternich regarded it as a particularly brilliant stroke to concede to Prussia only the north-eastern segment of Saxony and save the independence of the kingdom.

The plan of giving the German nation a closely-knit federal constitution with a strong central authority was also frustrated by the Austrian Chancellor. Germany remained split into three dozen sovereign states, each jealous of the other, all jealous of Prussia and looking to Austria for protection against the dangerous revolutionary doctrine of German unity which was merely a fantastic disguise for Prussian ascendancy.

All this looked like a series of spectacular results for Austria. On closer scrutiny, however, each of Metternich's triumphs reveals the seed of future disaster. To begin with, not only was the opportunity of creating a strong Germany under Austrian hegemony missed, but the leadership in the movement for German union was actually thrust upon Prussia. The idea of a united German state was naturally distasteful to Metternich because it was the aim set by the German national revival; in other words, it smacked of revolution. But he even rejected the plan of a compactly organized Germanic confederation presided over by Austria because it involved concessions to the despised and hated Hohenzollerns.



Fürst von Metternich

(From the engraving by C. E. Weber)

The Park at Schönbrunn

Photo by Reiffenstein, Vienna

So strong, indeed, was his aversion that he induced Francis to refuse the crown of the Holy Roman Empire, which at one moment twenty-five German princes solemnly offered to restore.

The consequence was that the adherents of Germanic unity, with their numbers rapidly swelling especially among the educated classes, came to regard Austria as *the* enemy of their aspirations, and focussed their hopes on Prussia. To the latter the integration of Germany seemed all the more desirable as its domains were cut in two by the Saxon kingdom, Metternich's *protégé*, a preposterous condition which rendered the defence of the Prussian frontiers a military impossibility. The Austrian Chancellor's short-sighted shrewdness provided Prussia both with the opportunity and the immediate incentive for taking the lead in German consolidation. Thus, in the decades that followed, the lines of Austrian policy were laid down in opposition to the trend of historic evolution, while Prussia was practically shoved by her rival into championing the inevitable.

The Italian annexations, too, proved in the long run a source of weakness rather than strength. To assimilate the densely-populated and highly-developed Northern provinces, with their culture in every way superior to that of Austria proper, was out of the question. The continued attempt to carry out a programme bound for failure from its inception not only absorbed a large part of Imperial energy but also planted an implacable and watchful enemy in the Empire's rear. Here, too, the purblindness of "the system" turned a brilliant opportunity into the germ of defeat. For there was a psychological moment when Austria, instead of trying to crush the gathering forces of Italian nationalism, might have turned them into a reservoir of Imperial strength by

organizing a league of Italian states which in time might have developed into a constitutional kingdom linked with the Empire by the person of the monarch. Metternich himself vaguely felt this; some of the leading Austrian officials like the governors Bellegarde, Hartig, and Strassoldo, suggested kindred ideas; but their proposals glanced off the impenetrable wall of Francis's immovability.

Still another crop of future trouble was sown by Metternich's Balkan policy. On that turbulent peninsula, too, the echo of the French revolution stirred into life the dormant national consciousness of the Christian subject races of Turkey. Indeed, it was here that Austria's finest opportunity beckoned. A century earlier Prince Eugene of Savoy, greatest of Imperial generals, pointed toward the Balkans as the natural outlet for Austrian expansion, and the liberation and organization of the Christian races there as Austria's historic mission. The time had now come to realize the dream of that brilliant commander and statesman. But Metternich, in his capacity of a fanatic of legitimacy, chose to champion the cause of Turkey as the lawful suzerain of the "rebellious" Slavs and Greeks. He openly allied himself to the Porte, thus giving Russia the chance of stepping into the vacated rôle of liberator.

All these errors and omissions could be reduced under one heading. The Congress of Vienna deliberately undertook to thwart the idea of national self-determination which during the Napoleonic wars had become the strongest force in European politics. That resplendent gathering of princes and diplomats deliberately treated the peoples as mere pawns in a game of chess; they were, in the words of Jefferson, bought and sold and bartered like cattle. The French were once more saddled with

the rule of the hated Bourbons; Italy and Poland were broken up to form the small change of the business of imperialism; the German national movement for unity was violently checked; the Christian peoples of Turkey were delivered to the tender mercies of their oppressors. These were offences against the spirit of history which could not fail to call down retribution upon the heads of those who committed them.

IV

The great work of the Congress of Vienna was done; the status quo of Europe (the diplomatist's learned name for the fool's paradise of custom) was restored. Metternich could proudly survey the achievements of his statesmanship. There exists a famous painting by Isabey, representing a gala session of the Congress—the makers of the Europe of 1815 arrayed round the conference table in a semicircle glistening with stars and grand crosses and epaulettes. The fine slender figure of Metternich, with his handsome face, set off by powdered locks, beaming self-satisfaction from behind a thin veil of nonchalance, occupies the centre. To the Prince (he had been elevated to that rank after the victory of Leipsic) that grouping arrangement in which attention was so tactfully focussed on his own shapely calves fixed forever the Divine Order of Things. Any attempt to change the balance and harmony of that picture he regarded ever after as rank blasphemy which called for immediate retribution.

But the Divine Order of Things was safe. On September 26th, 1815, the sovereigns of Austria, Prussia and Russia entered, at Paris, a solemn covenant pledging, in mystic formulas, to guide the peoples whose fates Providence had entrusted to them, solely in accordance with the tenets of the Christian religion and to regard

themselves henceforth as members of one great Christian nation. This pact, with its religious trimmings supplied by the Czar Alexander I, but infused with actual political contents by Metternich, was later known as the Holy Alliance, and was subscribed to by all European states save England, the Holy See and Turkey. It was, in reality, a great mutual insurance scheme against revolution. Its practical working was based on the doctrine of intervention, prescribing that in case of a revolutionary outbreak in any country it was the right and duty of the powers to send assistance to the legitimate government thus menaced.

During the generation which followed the Congress of Vienna this principle dominated European politics. It was applied successively in Spain, Poland, Belgium, Italy and Germany. Its chief sponsor and executor was Metternich; it was the magic spell wherewith he kept in check the powers of unrest; and while he strutted about in the rôle of a continent's arbiter, the peoples learned to call Austria the gaol keeper of Europe.

As Great Britain, alone among the great powers, refused to join the Holy Alliance, the doctrine of intervention broke down in those instances where armed action against the rebels was dependent on the control of the seas. This happened in South America where the colonies threw off the Spanish yoke under the protection of the British navy, and in Greece. In the former case Austria was not involved; but the establishment of Greek independence struck a heavy blow against the Metternichian system. It was the first great breach in the front of legitimacy in Europe; moreover, it caused the first split within the Holy Alliance itself. For Russia, eager to gain a foothold in the Balkans, rushed to the aid of the Greek Christians in alliance with France and Eng-

land, and manœuvred Austria into the awkward position of alone supporting the cause of the heathen Turk. This was the prelude to an alignment in the European Southeast which ultimately led to Austria's downfall.

These, however, were but peripheric disturbances. In Germany and Italy the system reigned supreme. True to the theory that all revolutionary movements were due to the intrigues of wicked individuals, the Austrian Government regarded the great national awakening of the two peoples as criminal conspiracies against law and order. Especially on Italy, treated by Vienna as a mere colony, did the mailed fist of the Metternichian régime rest heavily. Austrian prisons were thronged by the best sons of Lombardy and Venetia, serving heavy sentences on trumped-up charges of high treason; huge fines, levied upon the most trivial pretences, drained the coffers of wealthy Italian families as well as of municipalities and were applied to the upkeep of the foreign army of occupation and a swarm of police spies, whose terrorism maddened the population into futile isolated acts of violence. These were the methods whereby the spirit of Italy was to be broken and her sons were to be made good Austrians in sentiment and allegiance.

In vain one Austrian governor after the other raised his voice in protest against a policy of senseless tyranny which they were driven to carry out against their better judgment. They tried to impress upon the Vienna Government that the course pursued would inevitably lead to the loss of the two flourishing provinces. Their wise counsel fell on deaf ears. Metternich, knowing his master's mind, gave them no support.

And Francis? The Emperor felt serenely confident in the future. The period of wars was over. He could now indulge to his heart's content in a great emotional

orgy of passivity. There he stood, planted in the middle of Europe, with a distracted mien and arms and legs drooping, as his uncle had once described the young hedonist of inaction, determined not to budge until the trumpets of doom sounded. Inertia had brought him success; he saw no reason for emerging from it. He knew what methods suited his needs best.

"You say that my peoples are foreign to one another," he said to the French Ambassador who commented on the motley composition of the Empire. "So much the better. I can send Italian soldiers to Hungary and Hungarians to Italy. Out of their mutual antipathy rises law and order, and their hatred for each other produces general peace."

V

It may seem strange that Francis—as stubborn enemy of the people as ever sat on a throne—should have been, at least in the long years of peace following the Napoleonic struggle, very popular with his subjects, much more so than Joseph, their truest friend and benefactor, had been in his lifetime. But then, Joseph was handicapped by an aloof and ironic manner forming an icy halo of intellectual superiority around him which even his profound sympathy with human suffering could not melt. On the other hand, the very faults of Francis's character tended to endear him to the lowly. Being, in his heart, mortally frightened of his people, and determined not to yield to them an inch in essentials, he developed external traits wherewith to bait popularity. How could the typical Viennese petit bourgeois help loving an Emperor whose manners were *his* manners? Francis, the born Florentine, spoke the rough and hearty dialect of the artisans and cabmen of the Vienna faubourgs. Every

day he took a walk on the bastion, with the Empress on one arm, a big cotton umbrella under the other; he dressed in shabby civilian clothes (he practically never wore military uniform) and bowed to right and left with a kindly smile. He was easily accessible to all, and he spoke to petitioners in a coarse jovial way. His stereotyped "We shall see what we can do about it," delivered to all comers in the broadest Viennese, always impressed his good-natured subjects as an emphatic promise individually phrased to cover the particular emergency.

In short, Francis was as much a lowbrow as Joseph had been a highbrow. He sincerely despised learning which he, moreover, regarded as dangerous for the state, the source of revolutionary ideas. "I do not want scholars—I want good subjects," he once told a delegation of professors. Books to him were stuff and nonsense; philosophy, art, literature, even religion if tainted with mysticism, were collectively referred to as "those things," and were assigned to the jurisdiction of the police. He even distrusted technical progress; he was opposed to railroads because he feared that they might bring the revolution into the country.

His tastes matched his manners and his speech. The grandeur of some of his ancestors—a dark melancholy grandeur tinged with the morbid heritage of that Charles V who delighted in rehearsing his own funeral—was utterly alien to him. He made a point of being "just like other folks." He was frequently seen in the park of Schönbrunn wheeling around the perambulator of one of his grandchildren or the other, and even though the more intelligent of his subjects thought that an Emperor might spend his time more usefully, his unpretentiousness, part calculated, part genuine, appealed to the simple-minded. His jokes were inspired by his dialect.

When he for the first time saw the Bavarian princess Caroline Augusta who was to be his fourth wife, he said to his aide in a thunderous whisper: "That's a good one—she will stand a whack or two. At least I shan't have another funeral in a fortnight." People called him the good Emperor Franz.

VI

The news of the Paris revolution in July, 1830, which upset the throne of the last Bourbon and made the liberal bourgeoisie master of France, hit Metternich like a bolt from the blue. Only a few days earlier he expressed his approval of the ordinances of Charles X which now brought about his downfall. When he had finished reading the dispatch he literally collapsed, and he was found prostrate over his desk, with his head buried in his hands. "My life's work has been destroyed," he murmured faintly. The summer sojourn at the château of Königswart was at once interrupted; the Prince returned post-haste to the capital, not entirely to the displeasure of his faithful factotum Friedrich von Gentz, who, while hating the revolution and the overtime work it entailed on him, yet was enchanted with the prospect of rejoining his adored Fanny Elssler. Metternich urged armed intervention on a not unwilling Emperor. It was the course prescribed by the covenant of the Holy Alliance. Also, the peoples of the Empire had enjoyed peace for over eighteen years; and both sovereign and minister believed in the hygienic virtues of occasional bloodletting. Moreover, Metternich thought that war against France, that hotbed of subversive movements, was in itself a good thing, for, as he once put it, "the peoples do not willingly adopt the ideas of the enemy."

However, the Archduke Charles, selected because of his popularity to head the "crusade," refused the offered command, arguing that not only was Austria wholly unprepared for war, but also that a war of this kind, a war, that is to say, against opinions, is a most dangerous undertaking which is apt to hurt the victor as much as the vanquished. The trouble about sending an army to conquer a revolution is that the revolution may conquer the army. What with dissatisfaction brewing in the Italian provinces, in Hungary and Galicia, it was just as well not to expose the peoples of the monarchy to direct contact with the revolutionary French.

The plan of intervention was abandoned, owing, principally, to the determined opposition of the British government which held that it was strictly the business of the French people to choose its own form of government. Meanwhile the hot gust of revolt swept the continent from one end to the other. Russian Poland rose in arms against the Czar. This concerned Austria directly on account of the vicinity of its own disaffected Polish provinces. So keen, indeed, was the interest with which the Vienna Government pursued the developments in Poland that it adopted, not one policy, but three. At one moment it intimated its sympathy for the Polish cause. At the next it professed strict neutrality. Then again it suddenly remembered the solemn covenant of the Holy Alliance and threatened intervention against the rebels. The result was that everybody was displeased. Liberals and pro-Poles the world over denounced Austrian cowardice and Austrian reaction; conservatives sneered at Austrian weakness and Austrian perfidy; and the Russian government was deeply offended.

The explanation of this singular course lay in a chronic division within the Austrian Government itself,

the bitter antagonism of Metternich and the Minister of Interior and Finances, Count Kolowrat. The latter, though far from being a liberal, loved to act as a great patron of popular movements simply to make Metternich uncomfortable. It was his voice which spoke in the pro-Polish utterances of Vienna, while Metternich advocated support of legitimacy and solidarity with the Czar.

Kolowrat was an experienced administrator and an authority on finances—two branches of statesmanship to which Metternich always remained a stranger. The Count complained all the time that the Chancellor's expensive and pretentious diplomacy drained the resources of the Empire. Metternich, on his side, charged that Kolowrat's economies stabbed his foreign policy in the back. Kolowrat described Metternich as a reactionary, a patron of Jesuits and a bungler who constantly sacrificed the sound internal development of the Empire to his freakish or doctrinaire experiments abroad. Metternich, a subtler fighter, every now and then launched rumours that Kolowrat, poor dear, was in a bad way—that he suffered from a painful affliction, unmentionable in polite society, which affected his brain, and that he was just about to retire from office.

Between his fighting ministers Francis remained neutral. Metternich was his favourite; but he could not do without Kolowrat either, who understood the complicated mechanism of domestic administration better than anybody else. Besides, he was used to Kolowrat's face; the Count had served him for many years; dismissing him would have meant parting with a lifelong habit and forming a new one. It simply was not to be thought of. Kolowrat realized wherein his strength lay and terrorized the monarch by periodic threats of resignation.

That the continuous wrangling of the two ministers was extremely harmful to interests of state was evident. Yet Francis, instead of making them keep their peace or else clear out, encouraged their rivalry. Having no opinions himself, he usually agreed with the one he was listening to. Besides, deep down in the innermost recesses of his heart, he distrusted both, and welcomed their hostility as a means of checking the one by the other. Metternich would watch Kolowrat, and Kolowrat would watch Metternich, and Francis could feel safe and happy. It was one of Francis's few innovations—an extension of the ancient Habsburg principle of *divide et impera* to the precincts of the Imperial Cabinet.

To those who had the welfare of the Empire at heart the July revolution and its repercussions caused much anxiety. Once more it was high officials of state, the Court Chancellor Pillersdorf and the Bohemian Governor Count Chotek, who advised the Emperor to yield to the popular demands. But Francis was adamant. "No, no," he protested, "this is not the time for reforms. The people are too excited." Like that other great exponent of the conservative principle, the proverbial Irishman, Francis refused to mend his roof in bright weather when the hole did not matter, and pleaded that it was impossible to mend it in a storm. Metternich, adept in clothing his master's simple desires into verbiage that sounded exactly like statesmanship, told Pillersdorf that he was aware that standing still was tantamount to retrogression, but that

> "just at present the juncture was not propitious to innovations which must take place slowly in any event, evolve out of themselves, as it were. Violent, rapid changes, even when they are for the better, are always dangerous."

This was only the same Irishman talking his Sunday best. Those who had eyes to see and ears to hear remained unimpressed. "The whole world will profit by the upheaval," Grillparzer wrote, "but Austria will perish by it." And Baron Marschall, a veteran diplomat in the Imperial service, sighed: "If we march with the spirit of the times we shall fall to pieces; if we don't, we are going to be crushed."

CHAPTER III

THE HEIR

I

Early on the eighteenth day of August, in the year 1830, the whole Court was assembled in the drawing room adjoining the inner apartment of the Archduchess Sophie, daughter-in-law of the Emperor Francis, in the Imperial Summer Palace of Schönbrunn.

It was almost eight hours since the household had been alarmed. For days the Court had subsisted on a minimum of sleep, snatched here and there between long and harassed vigils, awaiting the great, the fateful event. Archdukes and Archduchesses, generals and ministers, chamberlains and ladies-in-waiting could hardly keep their eyes open in the onrushing heat of the summer morning. Here a Princess was dozing in an armchair, with her emergency coiffure drooping over a weary shoulder; there an elderly Archduke was mildly snoring on a settee, overcome at last with fatigue; some murmured prayers, others conversed in hushed tones; a few nervous ladies sobbed into their handkerchiefs; others, still more nervous, employed theirs in stopping their ears. At last, at a quarter to ten, on some sign, instinctively felt rather than consciously observed, an awed silence fell. Then like a sudden gust of wind over the treetops, a unison sigh of relief. Another endless moment's pause—then a tiny,

frightened, brand new voice piping inside. At last the Empress Caroline Augusta burst into the room, sobbing, panting, laughing, and threw her arms around half a dozen ladies at once.

"It is a boy!" she cried.

A sea of cheers rose as the gaunt figure of the Emperor appeared in the door. He held his arms aloft in speechless prayer, and for the moment he looked, not the petty and stubborn philistine that he really was, but the part thrust upon him by Fate: he looked Cæsar. Everybody rushed toward him; men and women struggled to kiss his hands and embrace his knees. Everybody in the room wept and laughed and shouted with joyous relief.

Such was the entry into this world of the Archduke Francis Joseph, first grandson of the Emperor Francis I of Austria in the male line, destined to be, for sixty-eight years, sovereign ruler of a mighty Empire—destined, also, to wind up the thousand-year-old line of Roman Emperors of the German nation, to be the last successor of Charlemagne.

In the days of Habsburg splendour the birth of an Archduke—in point of law a potential successor to the crown—was always a great event. And the tiny red breathless thing that, with four ugly little wounds in the back of his head, was now wriggling in the hands of a dozen Court physicians, midwives, whatnot, was not an ordinary Archduke at that. His grandfather the Emperor was an old man—he had now reigned thirty-eight years, and his health was none too good. His eldest son and heir, the Crown Prince Ferdinand, called King of Hungary because he had been, according to ancient custom, crowned in that country in the lifetime of his father, was a kindly man, full of the best intentions; unfortunately, he was also an idiot, or nearly one, and every-

body knew it. He was not married; it was extremely improbable that he ever would have an heir.

Ferdinand's brother, the Emperor's second son, the Archduke Francis Charles, was thus in the position of an heir-presumptive. But he was not much younger than his brother; he was a modest, inconspicuous man, remarkable only as the husband of an exceptionally clever, capable and vigorous wife, the Bavarian Princess Sophie. He was very fond of animals, and used to drive out every morning in the Prater, Vienna's Bois de Boulogne, in a carriage-and-six. Before the ride he would line up his six beautiful greys in a semicircle and address them with a short speech. The chances were against his ever occupying the throne of his ancestors.

Under these circumstances little Francis Joseph was universally regarded as the future sovereign, first of all by his own grandparents the Emperor and Empress, whose attitude emphasized on every point the exceptional importance of the birth of an heir to their second son. The Emperor's interest was expressed, among other ways, by the great care he exercised in personally selecting a nurse for his grandson.

The nurse of a little emperor-to-be was not like other nurses. She was a lady of noble birth and the best antecedents, and had the rank of an *Obersthofmeisterin* or Mistress of the Household. At court functions she walked in right behind the archduchesses and princesses of reigning houses, and in front of countesses and the wife of a mere prime minister. She commanded a whole army of governesses and maids and flunkeys, all of whom spoke to, and of, her as Her Excellency. She was the autocrat of the little Archduke's destiny in the first six years of his life, for archiducal parents had much more important duties to attend to than bothering about their children.

At the Habsburg court the title of such a gentlewoman-nurse-de-luxe was Aja, a word of Portuguese origin meaning Auntie. When the little Imperial Highness reached his sixth year he was taken away from the Aja and turned over to a tutor-in-chief called Ajo Primo, or Primo for short, himself a nobleman of high rank, assisted by a host of sub-tutors and special teachers.

The lady upon whom fell the task of bringing up little Francis Joseph was the Baroness Sturmfeder, daughter of a Swabian aristocrat with a position at the Württemberg court, many quarterings, ten children, and no money. She was born in 1789, received a most careful education, and when she was twenty-five years old her cousin and fiancé, the Count von Dalberg-Ostein, fell in battle against Napoleon. Thenceforth the Baroness devoted herself entirely to her family, living most of the time with a married sister on her husband's Moravian estate. She had many ideas that may be called surprisingly modern, and one of these was that an unmarried woman ought to have a job. She was recommended to the Emperor by Metternich, to whom she had been presented by her god-mother, the Countess Stadion.

One would assume that the earliest infancy of an Archduke was the smoothest affair in the world, that every need was anticipated, every precaution taken, every cog in the machine working one hundred per cent. efficiently to insure the greatest possible comfort and safety. This, however, was not the case. The incredible sloth and muddle which permeated every detail of Austrian life also stamped the management of the Imperial household. The maximum of fuss was combined with the minimum of results. Infant Archdukes and Archduchesses nearly got strangled with red tape. A dozen officials, male and female, were issuing orders,

The Archduke Francis Joseph, Aged Four Months

Painting by Ender, 1830, in the possession of the former royal family of Saxony

The Baroness Louise Sturmfeder, Francis Joseph's Chief Nurse, at the Age of 76

Photograph by Augerer in possession of the Baroness Helene and Sophie Dalberg

nobody obeying, everybody primarily interested, not in getting things done, but in proving that the other fellow did not do them. The external arrangements of the life of little Francis Joseph constituted a mess inconceivable in any ordinary upper middle class household.

Thus the new-born baby was lodged in an apartment of his own, consisting of six rooms, two of which belonged to him, one, with a cabinet partitioned off by a glass wall, to the Aja, and three to the servants. That would seem adequate accommodation for a young man a few weeks old. But these six rooms were situated between the apartments of the Archiducal couple and the Emperor; they were arranged *en suite;* and there was no connecting corridor or hall. Consequently all day and part of the night there was a continuous procession through the rooms—of Archdukes and chambermaids, Archduchesses and flunkeys and messengers. Moreover, every half hour or so there was an invasion of sightseers—parties made up of the Duchess of So-and-so, the Princess of This-or-that, and their sisters and sisters-in-law and nieces and cousins, who all wanted to see and grab and pet and nurse the darling little Archduke, the little shining star of Imperial hope, the little divine baby boy. To these excited ladies and their bestarred and gold-laced escorts it mattered not whether the poor baby was being bathed, or fed, or asleep—they came, and saw, and annoyed. But it wasn't the baby alone who thus suffered for lack of privacy. The sightseers would swarm the place when the poor Aja was combing her hair, or brushing her teeth, or saying her evening prayers. Many times she had to leap, half-dressed, behind a screen to avoid importune visitors—ranging from Emperor and Empress downward.

Nor was this all. Heating and ventilating arrange-

ments were primitive even by the standards of the age. The rooms were either suffocatingly hot, or else there was a draft. Worst of all, the little Archduke's bedroom was situated—it sounds incredible, yet it is literally true, —directly above the guards' lavatory—with atmospheric results, especially in warm weather, that may be imagined.

And the visitors did not content themselves with visiting. They also meant to participate. Everybody had a theory, or at least an expedient, to contribute to the comfort, physical and spiritual, of the little Archduke. He was dressed much too warm. Or he wasn't dressed nearly warm enough. He ought to be taken out—it was such a fine crisp sunny day. He mustn't, for heaven's sake, be taken out—it was so awfully cold. The best food for small babies was good strong clear beef broth. *Good gracious!* whoever heard of feeding beef broth—*beef broth!* to a small baby? No wonder the poor Aja, who bore her own sufferings without murmur, wrote in her diary: "The child of the poorest day labourer is not maltreated like this poor little Imperial Highness."

II

In all this muddle and misery there was one bright beacon, one rock of refuge for the "poor little Imperial Highness." It was the personality of the Aja. The Baroness Sturmfeder was one of those rare combinations of human variety: she was not only thoroughly good, but also thoroughly capable. She was a perfect woman, if there ever was one—at any rate, she was a perfect nurse. She was intelligent, energetic, conscientious, courageous, resourceful. She was probably the best thing that ever happened to Francis Joseph.

Born of a vigorous soldierly German family of the Empire, she had no patience with the everlasting Austrian

Schlamperei. Characteristically, she had received no instructions whatsoever when assuming her all-important duties. Just as characteristically, she was glad of not having received any, and, with constant invocations of the mercy and support of the Almighty, she sat down to work out her own methods. She did work them out fearlessly and consistently. As said above, some of her ideas were astonishingly ahead of her time. She believed in ventilation in an age when consumption was thought to be caused by cold air. She believed in physical exercise. She disbelieved in too much clothing. She had a most rational distrust of the physicians of her time, with their perpetual leeches and salves and plasters and hocus-pocus. She believed in letting well enough alone.

Above all, she was the deadly enemy of all pampering, spoiling, emasculating methods and tendencies. Her great principle was that the little Archduke must be treated like an ordinary child. She held that a boy must learn how to fend for himself, and if he received a number of bumps while learning it was all for the better.

One day the Archduchess, scared out of her wits by the talk of some ladies, told the Baroness that the baby was allowed to knock about too freely, that his toys had sharp edges and corners, that he would be sure to hurt himself, and that everything he played with must be covered up with cloth and padded. The Baroness first breathed a short prayer, then said that that was all right, but not enough; that the baby might hurt himself not only with his toys, but also with the sharp corners and edges of the furniture, and that therefore the best thing to do was to keep him in a padded box or cupboard, "which of course would be rather uncomfortable for him, nor would it be propitious for his health, as it would not fail to make a very helpless little being of him." The

Archduchess immediately saw the point and withdrew her suggestion with a neat apology.

As a result of the Aja's excellent methods of inculcating discipline and self-reliance, at the age of a year and a half Francis Joseph was a nice, well-behaved, orderly young man who took his meals without fuss, hardly ever cried, and was never ill except for colds in the head. By and by he even got himself trained to sleep in the midst of a raid of a dozen giggling enraptured princesses and murmuring, fumbling and crowing generals.

But there was one thing about him which the Baroness could not understand. The baby was terribly afraid to be left in the dark. The Aja, who on this subject, too, had extremely sensible and advanced ideas, decided that there must be a reason, and investigated. One day after luncheon the father, Archduke Francis Charles, played with the baby, and when, in the manner of fathers, he had enough of the game he made ready to go. But the baby would not let him, and took hold of the Archduke's sleeve. At last the latter pulled an angry face and said in a deep voice: "Here comes the big bow-wow."

The Baroness who saw and heard this jumped on the Archduke like a tigress.

> "I lost my temper" (she writes in her diary). "I turned white, then red with anger, and I told him that at last I needed not rack my brain to find out why the poor baby was so scared in the dark, that I now knew the reason, and that I should not wonder if the child would, as a result of such silly treatment, be frightened into a fit one day, and I pointed out that once he got fits of this kind he would probably never get rid of them as long as he lived. The Archduke was very much upset and defended himself by saying that when he was little they scared him, too, with the

> bow-wow. I lectured him for another half hour, and he listened patiently. But henceforth I shall always worry when he is with the baby."

Beside self-control and self-reliance the Aja insisted on orderliness. When the baby scattered things on the floor or in the garden he was not allowed to do anything until he had picked them up. The Baroness's severity in this respect greatly scandalised the ladies of the court, but she knew what she was doing, and she had the express approval of the Emperor.

> "I think ever so often" (she writes in her diary) "how glad my Lotte would be if she saw the spirit of orderliness that dwells in him, one might say is congenital in him, Without anybody telling, he puts his toys in perfect order, and he will not rest until every piece is in its customary place."

This orderliness remained Francis Joseph's dominant quality to the end of his days. It made him the most perfect bureaucrat that ever lived—and it probably prevented him from being anything else.

Another fundamental trait of his character was fully formed before he was two years old. It was his love for soldiers and soldiering. He wasn't eighteen months yet when he could tell the difference between "azizi," officer, and "dada," soldier. His greatest joy was to watch soldiers. It is no exaggeration to say that he could drill before he could walk. At the age of twenty months he amused the Emperor by marching up and down in his study, at the head of a squad of two, consisting of his father the Archduke and his grandmother the Empress. A few months later he would collect half a dozen grenadiers doing errands in the palace and drill them in a draw-

ing room. At three years he could tell apart not only the different arms, but also the different ranks and regimental facings and badges.

This love of soldiering in its external, spectacular aspects remained the ruling passion of his life. Supreme War Lord of one of the greatest armies of the world, he never understood higher military science; but he knew all about drilling, about service and dress regulations. He remained a subaltern in field marshal's uniform.

III

Little Franzi was the Emperor Francis's first grandson in the male line. There was, however, another in the female line: the Duke of Reichstadt, son of the Archduchess Marie Louise, the Emperor's daughter, from her marriage with the great (or, as the Imperial family would tenderly put it, the upstart) Napoleon. The Duke Francis Joseph Charles (curiously he bore the same Christian names as his little cousin) was born on March 20, 1811, and in the cradle received from his father the title of King of Rome. When Napoleon fell the boy was taken in charge by his grandfather on the maternal side, the Emperor of Austria, and given the title of Duke of Reichstadt, with the rank of an Imperial Prince. He lived at the Austrian Court until his death from consumption at the age of twenty-two.

The Duke—Rostand's "Eaglet"—is described in the Baroness's diary as a most attractive young man, very pale, handsome, and clever. "He is full of good sense and wit, and his exterior is most agreeable. There is probably a great deal going on in him these days." In "those days" the tricolour once more waved on the streets of Paris, and the cry "Vive l'empereur" was heard over the

barricades. The Baroness also says that at times the Duke looked very much like his father, and knew it.

Francis Joseph was about three months old when one day the young Duke called. He played with the baby, and suddenly said:

"He will be a very warlike prince."

The Aja asked why he thought so.

"He was born in the sign of the lion. He is being brought up by a lady who has storm in her body, and thirdly, he grows up by the drums, for under his windows is the guard. To grow up by the drums is very pleasant; but there are people who are the drums which are being beaten, and this is unpleasant."

The entry in the Baroness's diary is dated October 20, 1830. Eighty-four years later an old man who once had played on the knees of Napoleon's son signed a document starting the greatest war in history.

IV

Grandfather and grandson just adored each other. Francis visited the baby every day, and it was an established custom to take the little one in to him every evening after supper. The two then played for an hour before the infant was put to bed. Usually they played soldier; or else the Emperor would make up toys for him out of cardboard—soldiers, a Noah's ark, little boxes, whatnot. He took the baby to the Zoo in the Schönbrunn park, and on the way back, through cheering and bowing crowds, the Empress pushed the perambulator.

One evening in the winter of 1831 the baby, as usual, was playing in the Emperor's study. The old man showed him some etchings; then he took a small wax candle, lighted it, blew it out and said: "The life of a man is like this—it is a light that goes out." "When I heard

Him saying this I could hardly suppress my tears; for I knew He was thinking of Himself!" wrote the good Baroness in her diary that night.

No one made such an impression on baby as Grandpapa. Whenever Franzi was naughty the old man's uplifted finger would restore his manners. One of the Aja's difficulties was to get baby away from Grandfather's room. The Emperor was intensely concerned with the child's mental development. One of his last words on his deathbed were, "He must be brought up in her spirit." He meant the Baroness.

It is one of the fundamental teachings of modern psychological science that a person's character is formed in all its essential traits before he is seven. The experiences and impressions, the likings and dislikes of infancy thus acquire paramount importance; a child's early relations and attitudes to its parents in most cases determine its latter evolution. To the baby Francis Joseph his nondescript father meant little. His grandfather, beloved and admired, meant everything. For the rest of his long life Francis Joseph had one supreme ambition: to be like grandfather. He succeeded only too well. At the outset of the twentieth century the Austrian Empire was steered by a ghost: the ghost of the Emperor Francis.

V

In 1832 a second son was born to the Archduchess Sophie, and was baptized Ferdinand Max. The Baroness Sturmfeder regarded the new baby as an interloper, and positively resented that he was handsome—handsomer even than the very good-looking little Franzi. To her Franzi was "my own boy." Maxi was "the stepchild."

By and by the extraordinary sweetness of the smaller

boy conquered her antipathy. Who could resist a little blond thing with big blue eyes who would say, "Amie, you know, I love you just so much as you love Franzi"? So Amie ended by loving "the stepchild," too.

But it was too late. Maximilian's character was set. He could never forget the pangs of his early years when he was made to feel that he was not wanted, that Franzi was the real thing and he merely a bad copy. His life was to be a ceaseless protest against having to play second fiddle. He grew up a sensitive, melancholy little boy, always fearful of being teased or neglected, hiding his timidity behind an overdone display of self-assertion. His one aim in life was to show that he was, after all, a finer fellow than his brother; and this infantile ambition, roused by the Aja's early hostility, drove him into that great adventure of exotic conquest and grandeur which ended on the Hill of Bells before Juarez's firing party at Querétaro.

In 1836 little Francis Joseph, now six years old, was taken away from the Baroness and entrusted to a staff of tutors under the guidance of the Count Henry Bombelles. To the poor Aja parting with her beloved Franzi was a terrible blow. No mother ever loved her child with a tenderer and more passionate love than this old maid loved her little charge. The remaining pages of her diary reflect the tortures of a soul writhing in hell-fire.

"Oh, I still see my little Franzi at times," she wrote after the parting, "but it is not my Franzi any more—it is the Archduke Franz."

It was. The eyes of the dynasty, of the Empire, rested on this boy of six—and the eager, clever, passionate eyes of his mother Sophie. She steered him along a straight course at the end of which shone the Imperial throne.

Every day of his life the little fellow was made to feel that the day would come when he was to be addressed as Your Majesty—by old Dukes and ministers and generals, by his own father and brothers. For the time being he had to attend his lessons—and attend them he did willingly, dutifully, with a deliberate earnestness that was more than precocious—that was almost inhuman. The good Aja's early training proved successful—with a vengeance. There was somewhere in the depths of this handsome and sweet child a core that was as hard as steel, and less pliable.

CHAPTER IV

THE WILL

I

Of all the unpleasant facts which the Emperor Francis spent a lifetime in dodging none was more distasteful to him than the certainty of his own death. He regarded it as a kind of long-maturing cosmic conspiracy to upset the status quo against which even his omnipotent police availed nothing. He strove, at least, to shut the subject out of his consciousness. Yet there were urgent reasons why he should have devoted particular thought to it. From his earliest childhood on his first-born and heir, the Crown Prince Ferdinand, had shown signs of mental insufficiency. In the course of years his condition grew worse instead of improving.

As far back as in 1807 the "good genius" of the House of Habsburg, the Archduke Charles, appealed to his brother to arrange for a regency. "May you live long for the sake of your peoples," he wrote, "but you must provide for the emergency of a sudden misfortune placing them into the hands of a spiritual minor." But Francis was in no hurry. Metternich, too, referred to the matter more than once; but Francis put him off, and the Chancellor was not the man to harp long on an unpleasant topic.

After his coronation as King of Hungary Ferdinand

was drawn into the business of government. He was being coached by the leading ministers and attended council sessions. The experiment brought sad, if not unexpected, results. Ferdinand proved himself utterly incapable. He did not understand what he was told; he could not concentrate on anything. But he was thoroughly good-natured. His only aim was to please everybody. "What a difference between the Emperor and the Crown Prince," grumbled Kolowrat. "You cannot get the Emperor's consent to anything, and Ferdinand would sign everything—I am telling you, *everything*."

Francis realized that his son could never actually assume the responsibility of government. Yet he did nothing. This, for the moment, was the easiest thing to do. But Metternich, otherwise so tactful, so anxious to please, kept on worrying him. It was suggested, in the most circumspect and diplomatic manner, that he should alter the order of succession. That, of course, was out of the question. It would have been sheer blasphemy; for wasn't it God Himself who had made Ferdinand his first-born? As well repudiate outright the sacred principle of legitimacy. Besides, it would have been such a bother.

The question of a regency, like the question of governmental and fiscal reform, like the question of concord within the cabinet, like the question of popular discontent, like the German question, the Polish question, the Hungarian question, the Italian question, the Balkans question, like all other questions, was allowed to drift along unanswered. On December 31, 1834, the Prince Metternich, delivering his felicitations for the New Year, once more begged to remind His Majesty of "the hiatus which would occur in case of his—which God forbid!—

death." Cornered, Francis chose his usual escape; he pleaded guilty. "Yes, I am facing you as a repentant sinner," he told the Chancellor, "but I promise you, the year 1835 shall not pass without the fulfilment of my obligation."

The good resolution may have been sincere; like all of Francis's ideas, it came too late. On February 12 Francis celebrated his sixty-eighth birthday. On the 25th he was smitten with an attack of pneumonia. The court physician made light of it, so that Metternich did not even cancel the ball scheduled for the evening. Six days later Francis was dead.

As the news of his death spread over town a crowd assembled in front of the Imperial palace and wept bitterly. A high official, passing by, addressed them: "Don't cry, children—everything will remain as of old." "That is just why we cry," replied one of the mourners.

It was a great, a tremendous, event. The mystic spell wherewith the custom of two generations' obedience, the inertia of a world grown old with him, had surrounded Francis, was now broken. The majority of his subjects did not recall a time when he did not reign over them; he seemed to have become a law of nature. Now he was no more; and the easy-going Viennese flocked to his funeral with merry faces as to a carnival.

The merrymakers were wrong; it was the weeping mourners who had guessed the truth. Two days before the Emperor's death his last will and testament had been presented to Ferdinand. It was a most remarkable, a unique, document.

> "Do not shift," it said, "the foundations of the edifice of state. Reign, and change nothing; plant yourself firmly and unswervingly in the soil of the principles by whose constant observance I

> not only guided the Monarchy through storm and stress, but also secured for it the high place which it occupies in the world."

Ferdinand then is admonished to preserve concord within the reigning house as one of its most precious possessions, and to consult, in all important domestic affairs, his uncle the Archduke Louis.

Then follows the peroration.

> "Confer upon the Prince Metternich, My most faithful servant and friend, the same trust as I bestowed on him through such a wide span of years. Do not make any decisions on public policy or on personal matters without listening to his counsel. On the other hand, impress upon him the duty to act toward you with the same sincerity and true devotion as he has always shown me."

It was an excellent job, shrewdly planned and brilliantly executed. The dying Emperor, nagged by remorse over past omissions, torn by anxiety as to future pitfalls, was only too happy to copy out in his trembling hand the draft placed before him by the cunning Chancellor. He changed the wording here and there; but in essence the imperial manuscript covered paragraph by paragraph the document drawn up by Metternich. Nor was the scheme contrived on the spur of the moment. At least three years earlier Metternich had instructed his literary alter ego, Friedrich von Gentz, to draft a "political testament" emphasizing the necessity of "preserving most carefully everything that exists, and of resisting every innovation in the political system, every attempt to upset the status quo." Gentz did as he was bidden, and noted that in phrasing the instrument he had availed himself of "the greatest simplicity, so as not to be untrue to the tone which should dominate the whole," in

other words, so that it should look as if it had been written by Francis—no doubt a painful task for the writer of the best German prose of the day.

Thus the Emperor's death, which some optimists had hoped would rid the country from the incubus of "the system," fastened, instead, the Chancellor's grip over the state into a permanent stranglehold. It was Metternich's greatest coup. For his bitterest rival, the Count Kolowrat, was not even mentioned in the "last will and testament"; and his special domain, internal affairs, were expressly assigned to the Archduke Louis.

The selection of this personage, too, was a brilliant stroke. All the other brothers of the late Emperor—Charles, John, Joseph, Rainer, were imcomparably superior to him in gifts and in character; but they all leaned toward liberalism and were, or had been, embroiled in bitter feuds with the Chancellor. Louis was a nonentity—fat, vain, stupid—and a dyed-in-the-wool reactionary. Metternich could not have found a more convenient figurehead.

II

It looked like smooth sailing for the Prince. When he left the room where the Emperor had just expired, Metternich, walking home across the bastion, was met by his physician Dr. Jaeger. The cheeks of Francis's "most faithful servant and friend" were flushed; his eyes beamed happiness. He hailed Jaeger. "Victory, my good Doctor! We have crossed the Rubicon. Ferdinand is Emperor!" "In other words, Richelieu!" smiled the physician. He was not contradicted.

Doubtless it was Metternich's honest conviction that Austria needed a Richelieu to guide the steps of the spiritually minor monarch. For the first time in his life

Count Kolowrat, so grievously slighted by the Emperor's will, agreed with him. They only disagreed as to who was cast for the rôle of the great Cardinal. Metternich was convinced that Metternich was Richelieu. Kolowrat was sure that Kolowrat was Richelieu. It was a delicate point. A few days later the two statesmen had it out. What they said to each other is not recorded, but as Metternich had the tongue of a serpent and Kolowrat the temper of a bull, the interview must have abounded in thrilling moments. Possibly Kolowrat dropped a remark or two as to the authorship of the Emperor's testament.

Presently the Chancellor, suave as ever, announced that the supreme authority of the Empire received a valuable addition in the noble person of the Count Kolowrat. "The Archduke Louis, I and Count Kolowrat," he declared, paying strict attention to the rules of precedence, "stand united, one for all and all for one." That was a very pretty sentiment. It was even partly true. Once more the two rivals stood united—on one issue. They agreed that the Archduke Louis did not count. Right there their concord ceased. The history of the Austrian government during the next thirteen years might be described as their duel, fought with fair weapons and foul—mostly foul. Metternich did not exaggerate when he later named this feud as one of the principal causes of the revolution of 1848.

It would be hard to conceive of a clumsier and less efficient mechanism of government than that of a duumvirate of mortal enemies presided over by a cipher. To the initiate it was clear that neither Metternich nor Kolowrat gave a rap for the welfare of the Empire if they could only put each other in the wrong. Metternich was indefatigable in devising new pin pricks and

The Archduke Francis Joseph Rewards the Sentry at Laxenburg (1834)

The other figures are the Emperor Francis, the Empress Caroline Augusta and the Baroness Sturmfeder, Francis Joseph's governess

Painting by Kriehuber

The Archduchess Sophie with the Archdukes Francis Joseph (left) and Maximilian (right)

1833

Lithograph by Kriehuber after Ender's painting

planting new traps for Kolowrat. On his side the Minister of Interior now avowedly allied himself with the liberals in order to undermine the position of the Chancellor whom he ridiculed for his fixed idea of exorcising the evil spirit of revolt with the aid of bayonets, spies and incense.

It was, as the Czar Nicholas delicately put it, a unique situation—an absolute monarchy without a monarch, scoffed the President of the Treasury, Baron Kübeck. Ferdinand signed everything that was placed before him; the question was, who would rush him first. The introductory heat was won by Metternich.

Immediately upon his accession Ferdinand signed a decree authorizing the Jesuits, the Chancellor's pets, to substitute their own curriculum, called *ratio studiorum*, for the schedule prescribed by the Emperor Joseph for all schools and colleges of the realm. This measure was the first fruit of the instructions bequeathed by the Emperor Francis to his successor in a second instrument which had been prepared by his confessor, the Bishop Wagner, with the Chancellor's connivance, commanding him to abandon the ecclesiastic policy of Joseph and to return to the sacred principles laid down by the Council of Trident. Soon the restrictions governing the Jesuits' places of settlement were also removed. These concessions to the hated and feared order caused general consternation; some of the highest officials of the state, still steeped in the enlightened tradition of Joseph, discerned in them "the germ of the decay and dissolution of this beautiful Empire."

III

Perhaps the worst feature of the "unique situation" was that the whole world was in the secret. Metternich

made frantic efforts to keep up appearances. His publicity bureau turned out eulogies by the ream about the new Emperor's industry and energy, his kindness, his quick perception. He possessed, it was suggested, much more capacity for government than was credited to him by people who did not know him or only had seen him in his moments of self-consciousness. But the official press-agenting fooled nobody. The foreign diplomats who came into contact with the Emperor despatched amazed accounts of his disability. "I had not thought it was so bad," wrote the secretary to the Saxon legation, Count Vitzthum, after his first audience. The people of Vienna were patronizing. "Poor Ferdy is an idiot," they said.

The people liked poor Ferdy. The grotesque contrast between his childlike helplessness and the exalted pretensions of his office appealed to the Viennese sense of humour; his kindliness to all creatures touched everybody's heart. The Emperor loved to slip away for walks unescorted, dressed in his white, gold-laced field marshal's uniform and a tall cocked hat with green plume, carrying under his arm a most incongruous umbrella. He stopped to talk to people and inquired after their health and their wives' and aunts' and cousins' health, and played with little children in the park, until some aide or equerry, strutting and fuming, tracked him and shooed him home.

Once he met in a Vienna street, a blind beggar, walked up to him, and presented him with a gold ducat, saying: "Here, my good man, take this. You are blind, aren't you? How awful!" The "blind" mendicant, sizing up the monarch with a hawk's glance from behind his compressed eyelids, bowed deeply and said in a shaky voice: "Yes, your Majesty, I am blind, and what's worse I

am deaf and dumb as well." "Oh dear, dear, how terrible," sighed the good Emperor. "Here is another ducat, my poor friend."

The Lobkowitz family is one of the great noble houses of Bohemia. It has given the Empire no end of generals, ministers, ambassadors and other dignitaries. One day a young Prince Lobkowitz was introduced to Ferdinand. The latter scrutinized the youthful aristocrat with a perplexed look. "Are *you* a Lobkowitz?" he demanded at last, shaking his head doubtfully. "Yes, your Majesty." "But—but how old are you?" "Twenty, your Majesty." "Well, well! Only twenty, and already a Lobkowitz!" murmured the sovereign.

Stories like these, freely circulating among all classes, did not tend to increase the respect for monarchical institutions in an age seething with revolutionary discontent. Indeed, the principle of Legitimacy in whose hallowed name Francis had refused to change the order of succession, could not have received a more severe blow than that inflicted through its insane and stubborn application.

IV

The battle of the two selfish and hard old men, refereed by a fool and staged under the auspices of an imbecile, which in the decade following Francis's death was called government in Austria, went on. Among those who were watching its ravages with shame and apprehension none was more deeply concerned than the Emperor's sister-in-law, the Archduchess Sophie. For was not the Empire thus despoiled by the vanity and extravagance of Metternich, the vengeful short-sightedness of Kolowrat and the obese smugness of Louis, the rightful inheritance of her own adored Franzi? Sophie, her keen

and alert mind quickened by her mother's fears, saw clearly that the "régime of the three ancients" was sowing the wind, and that it was her own darling boy who would ultimately reap the whirlwind. Her heart writhed in agony; but her brain was at work devising help.

She was the fourth among the six daughters of King Maximilian I of Bavaria. The "six Bavarian sisters" were famous for their beauty and cleverness; Sophie, not the least handsome, was the cleverest of them all. Three of them were married to German kings; the eldest, Caroline Augusta, was the fourth and last wife of the Emperor Francis. Thus Sophie, married to Francis's second son, had her own half-sister for mother-in-law.

It was not only for their good looks and bright minds that the six princesses were noted. They belonged to the pillars of Catholic reaction; and as German Catholics supported the cause of Austrian hegemony in a loose confederation against that of Prussian leadership of a tightly-joined union, the Protestant and pro-Prussian party and the liberals emulated one another in denouncing the "Bavarian sisters of woe," as Treitschke called them, among the most dangerous enemies of a united Germany.

Sophie's marriage was not one of love. She was eighteen when her parents told her that the Archduke Francis Charles of Austria had been selected for her husband. She threw herself at their feet. "That imbecile? Never!" she sobbed her protest. She was given to understand that the connection had been decided upon by the Congress of Vienna. That ended the matter. Years later her sister Ludovica used to relate how Sophie, bidding farewell to her family after the wedding ceremony, had said with a defiant toss of her head: "I have resolved to be happy, and I am going to be." She lived

to carry out her resolution. Her trail was marked with blood and tears, her road was lined with corpses—but she reached her goal; she became a happy woman.

Her first reaction to marriage and to Vienna was boredom verging on despair. Her Wittelsbach blood pulsed in time with the great Romantic movement that in the first third of the nineteenth century enthralled Germany and bore such noble flowers in music, poetry and philosophy. Sophie grew up amidst the revival of Catholic mysticism which was the religious aspect of this movement. Now, the Vienna court was intensely Catholic, too; but a world of difference separated that which was regarded good Catholicism at Munich from the Vienna variety. At the Austrian court the late eighteenth century tradition was still lingering on which regarded the Church as the servant of the State, a kind of spiritual policeman, as it were. External observances like hearing mass and attending communion regularly were essential to one's welfare in this world as well as in the next; but mysticism and zealotry were distinctly unfashionable; they were called high-strung, the word hysterical having then no currency. Moreover, Catholic mysticism might, and usually did, intensify into a passion; but passions were revolutionary; consequently Catholic mysticism, like all other spiritual tendencies, was a matter for supervision by the police.

The lukewarm, externalized, mercenary attitude toward religion prevalent at Vienna aroused Sophie's contempt. She threw herself on to the bosom of the Roman Church with all the passionate *élan* of her nature; she sought in it comfort and ecstatic gratification, and at the same time an outlet for her literary dilettantism. She belonged to those who wished to awaken the Church from her petrified subservience to the State, and make her

once more its mistress. The Archduke Louis, nominal head of the regency, on the other hand, shared the orthodox Austrian official view of religion and, in his clumsy flat-footed way, teased his "sentimental," "queer" niece.

But Sophie's craving for happiness sought gates other than those of the kingdom of heaven. One of them opened into a friendship. The most romantic figure at the deplorably unromantic Austrian court was the young Duke of Reichstadt. He was very young; he was very handsome and very clever; he was surrounded by the doubly tragic aura of the splendour of his birth and the shadow of death approaching with muffled footsteps. Napoleon's son, imprisoned by the murderous kindness of his grandfather in the white uniform of an Austrian lieutenant-colonel, dreamed of a life of great deeds while his slender body rapidly faded away. In the summer of 1830, when volleys were crackling on the streets of Paris and the tricolour once more supplanted the white banner, he thought for a moment that his star had risen. But it was not to be. He was the guest of a loving and tenacious grandfather, and Paris was far off. Louis-Philippe, son of Egalité, climbed a repainted throne with his umbrella and his goloshes, and with hope, life slowly ebbed out of the pale veins of the second Napoleon.

He had found warmth and understanding with another thwarted soul: Sophie. She was six years his senior, and could do for him what his mother Marie Louise never did: she mothered him. They often rambled together through the clipped avenues of the Schönbrunn park—perhaps a little too often, even; in the corners and corridors of the palace eloquent forefingers rising to malicious lips finished many a half-whispered tale of scandal.

When the young Duke lay wrestling with death, a

perplexed family discussed ways of administering extreme unction without unduly shocking him. Sophie said: "Let me do it." She was expecting her second child; that was her pretext for offering to receive the sacrament in his company. "It's for your early recovery," she whispered tenderly as she kissed the dying Eaglet on the forehead.

V

The friend was gone; but she had her sons, and her dreams. She had resolved to be a happy woman; she now sought happiness by living for, and in, her boys—in her adored first-born, above all—little Franzi, who was to become Emperor, successor of Cæsars, ruler of one of the greatest powers in Christendom. All her passion, all her strength, her love, her determination went into preparing him for his sublime calling. Difficulties only spurred her on. From the outset she worked, consciously and systematically, for one great purpose: to clear the road for Franzi. Ferdinand must abdicate, her own husband must renounce his right to the succession. The "how" and "when" were uncertain; but those were details; on the main point she felt strong and sure like steel, and she prayed and trusted to God.

Her vigil was hard. She had to look on while three impotent old men, efficient only in thwarting one another, squandered away the ancestral estate. How she hated them: the sluggish and grinning Uncle Louis, this breathing, eating, snoring statue of stagnation, with his abominable motto, "You settle it best if you leave it lie." And Metternich, with his ironed-out smile, his hair-curlers and his stays, sweet like treacle and obstinate like a mule, who regarded history as a dressing-room lined with mirrors in which to try on his assorted atti-

tudes, who in 1835, in 1840, in 1845 still thought it was 1815. Had he no eyes to see, no ears to hear, that the time demanded changes? Had he no perception of the fact that the one sure way of bringing on revolution was to oppose all change and to nail down all valves?

Sophie was no liberal; she took no stock in the democratic rubbish broadcast by demagogues in spite of all the vigilance of Metternich's famous police. But she had seen in her Bavarian home her father reign over a contented and obedient people with the aid of a constitution voluntarily accorded; that word, which sent shivers down the spines of her father-in-law Francis and that garrulous old spinster Metternich, held no terrors for her. She wanted to set her son on the throne of a strong empire inhabited by a loyal and satisfied people; her mother's instinct rather than her intellect grasped that some of the demands proffered by the "wicked" and "infatuated" agitators were justified, and that the danger lay in resisting, not in granting them.

She looked for allies. One was close at hand. Kolowrat readily agreed with the Archduchess that Metternich was steering toward certain shipwreck, and must be checked. The Minister of Interior, hidebound Czech junker that he was, patronized the Chancellor's liberal enemies. He consented to mediate between Sophie and the leaders of the opposition.

CHAPTER V

PREPARATION

I

Like the excellent Baroness Sturmfeder, the new Ajo Primo of the little Archduke Franz and his brothers was the choice of the omnipotent Chancellor. To not a few people at court it seemed a strange choice. To begin with, the Count Henry Bombelles was a foreigner. So, in the eyes of the Emperor Francis, had been the Baroness, a Württembergian; but she at any rate was German. Bombelles was a Frenchman born and bred, son of a diplomat of the *ancien régime* who had been the envoy of his King to Lisbon and later to Venice. After the revolution the Marquis Bombelles, with his family, sought refuge abroad; he served the Royalist cause the best he could at various capitals, and finally landed in Austria. There were five sons and a daughter, and very little property. The Marquis was an ardent Catholic. When his wife died he sought spiritual comfort in a monastery. Incidentally his board and lodgings were taken care of, and there was so much more money left for the children. Later he was ordained, and when Louis XVIII ascended the throne of his ancestors he returned to France, too. The father of five sons and a daughter was appointed Bishop of Amiens, and died as such in 1822.

The Bishop's sons entered the Austrian service, and

rose high. One of them, Charles, succeeded the great Napoleon. After the Emperor's death his widow, Marie Louise, daughter of Francis of Austria, married her Master of Household, the Count Adam Neipperg, to whom she had borne a son even in Napoleon's lifetime. The ex-Empress's second marriage was much happier than the first. Neipperg matched her better. When he died in 1829 she was heartbroken. As reigning Duchess of Parma she needed masculine guidance, and such was provided for her by Metternich in the person of the young Marquis Charles de Bombelles. Marie Louise was at once passionate and prudent. One Master of the Household had proved a marital success. She tried again, and was not disappointed. It was her private Legitimist restoration. The Marquis, beside being an affectionate husband, was a zealous son of the Church who took great interest in his wife's spiritual welfare, and ultimately succeeded in converting her to the strictest brand of Catholicism.

His younger brother Henry, too, owed his rise in the world to the Chancellor's patronage. The son of the Roman Catholic Bishop enjoyed the Prince's unlimited trust. When in 1850 the Count Bombelles died Metternich paid tribute to him in spirited words. "I always counted the Count Henry Bombelles," he wrote, "among the small number of people who thought as I thought, saw as I saw and wanted what I wanted." What praise could mount higher? Other contemporaries were less enthusiastic. The Baron Wessenberg, ex-Foreign Minister, an intelligent and wise liberal, summarized his opinion by saying that Bombelles was remarkable for nothing except his assiduously demonstrated piety and his passion for the Jesuits.

His religious fervour must have recommended the

Count to the Archduke Franz's mother, but otherwise Sophie did not think highly of him, and let the Chancellor know of her disapproval. But Metternich was stronger. He regarded it as a matter of utmost importance that the education of the future Emperor should be in charge of one who thought as he thought, saw as he saw and wanted what he wanted.

If the Archduchess Sophie could not thwart Bombelles's appointment, she could at least provide a counterweight. The Ajo Primo was merely a supervisor; the actual instruction of the little Archdukes was entrusted to others. Each of the three little princes (the third was Charles Louis, born in 1833) had a governor, and each governor in his turn was assisted by several tutors and instructors in the various branches of study.

The governor of the Archduke Franz was Colonel Count John Alexander Coronini-Cronberg. He was a soldier of the old school—stiff and stern and pedantic, but straight as a nail and, within the limited horizon of his class, fair-minded and not illiberal. His lack of imagination was overcompensated, as the phrase goes, by his excessive emphasis on the disciplinary side of soldiering. If, in comparison with the Count Bombelles, his political ideas seemed modern it was because in reality he was more old-fashioned; for while Bombelles had been brought up and lived in the ultramontane world of the Restoration, Coronini was rooted in the fine old tradition of Josephine enlightenment.

It was the Colonel's task to make an Archduke and a soldier out of the good Aja's sweet little boy, and he succeeded only too well. For even in the sweet little boy orderliness and a sense of duty were the strongest characteristics. The Baroness had done her best to develop them. Under Coronini's somewhat grim régime

they absorbed almost everything else. By the time Coronini got through with them the Baroness's charming and jolly little Franzi had turned into a rather thin-lipped, ultra-serious, reserved young man, greatly pre-possessed with his dignity.

Most little boys love to play at soldiering, but most little boys forget about it as they grow up. Little Arch-dukes in the old days were not allowed to forget. For them the real soldier play began when for other little boys it ended. They played at it a lifetime, and called it work. Some of them did not like it, but by far the most did; and none liked it better than Francis Joseph.

In the days when Habsburg was in flower it was no easy thing to be a little Archduke, and it was still less easy to be a little heir-presumptive. One's days were mapped out as thoroughly and comprehensively as a rail-road timetable. Nothing was left to chance; every duty and every pleasure had its appointed hour; every hour its appointed duty or pleasure—but mostly duty. One rose at 7 A.M. One went to bed at 8 P.M. In the thir-teen hours between one was hardly better than a little slave. Here is the Archduke Franz's weekly schedule at the age of six:

	Monday Wednesday Friday	*Tuesday Thursday Saturday*
7–7.30 A.M.	Dressing	Dressing
7.30–8	Hungarian	Hungarian
8–9.30	Breakfast	Breakfast
9.30–10	Drawing	French
10–10.30	German	French
10.30–11	German	Writing
11–11.30	Writing	Writing

11.30–12	Geography	Geography
12–2 P.M.	Going out	Going out
2–3	Dinner	Dinner
3–4	Resting	Resting
4–5	French	German
5–7	Riding, Dancing,	Drilling
7	Supper	Supper
8	To bed	To bed

That is plenty for a boy of six. As the years went by new subjects—Latin, history, politics, law—were added to the curriculum, and less leisure was allowed. Physical exercise—gymnastics, riding, dancing—was emphasized throughout, a feature greatly in advance over the continental standards of the period. One great result was certainly achieved by Count Coronini's methods. They reinforced into a second nature that love and aptitude for regular work the seed of which had been sown by the good Baroness and which served the later Emperor through a lifetime as his strongest asset. Still, even that was not an unmixed blessing; for its reverse side was a worship of rote and routine, a quasi-religious faith in the virtue of bureaucratic disposal strangely reminiscent of what old Count Colloredo called a preoccupation with irrelevant detail in the grandfather.

Owing to the motley population of the Empire Archdukes had to learn several languages, with the result that they usually did not master any one, not even their mother tongue. Pure German was never spoken at the Vienna court; it was left to scholars and actors and suchlike lowborn and impossible people. The Imperial family, like the high nobility, spoke unadulterated Viennese dialect; it was the only idiom in which Francis Joseph ever felt really at home. His written German, however,

was correct, clear and vigorous; he could express simple ideas forcefully, and had none other to express. At the age of five he began to study Czech; he also acquired, as a child, a good talking knowledge of French and some Hungarian and Italian. He was taught to speak Latin, too, for in the early part of the nineteenth century Latin was still the official language in Hungary and Galicia. The little Archdukes sometimes even corresponded in Latin with one another.

Six days a week Franzi had a Hungarian lesson from seven-thirty to eight in the morning. Breakfast was at eight. Hungarian is a difficult language—by far the most difficult in the study plan of the little Archdukes. The court hated the Hungarians. They were regarded as a necessary evil, and so was the study of their language. It was not desirable that the heir to the throne should feel any particular affection for that strange unmanageable race. Francis Joseph never felt any particular affection for them. No other people of the Empire caused him so much worry. At times he treated them very harshly indeed. He may have remembered those years of Hungarian conjugation and syntax on an empty stomach.

It was found hopeless to teach little Franzi music. He had no ear. But he could draw. Remarkably well, even. A number of pen-and-ink sketches, preserved from his boyhood, display a keen sense for caricature. What became of this gift later? He quit sketching when he ascended the throne; he grew up the most humourless of men. Perhaps this little wonder of self-discipline, concentration and duty forbade himself the possession of a sense for art and a sense for fun as incompatible with the dignity of Cæsar and the efficiency of a governing automaton.

II

Little Franzi had to work a great deal more than most boys of his age. His brothers were expected to work just as much, but they simply did not. Franzi loved work, and never shirked. Still, it was not all study and drill. On Sunday afternoons great *goûters* were given, with an abundance of coffee and whipped cream, cakes, doughnuts, almond milk and sweetmeats; and if the boys had been particularly good Count Coronini had a small mountain of ice cream fetched from Dehne's—wonderful confections representing medieval castles, or baskets of fruit, or assorted beasts of the jungle.

Those were jolly little stag parties. The four Falkenhayn boys would come, and Count Coronini's son Franzi, and little Edi Taaffe, and Henry Salis; and the boys built a fortress which was a present of grandma's, garrisoned it with cardboard soldiers, and then shot it to bits with a small field piece worked by a spring; and the beauty of it was that when the fortress was but a heap of ruins (smoking ruins the boys called it in the best Tom Sawyer vein) it could be put together again, and the entertainment began *da capo*.

There was also a small theatre, with wonderful puppets just like real people, and machinery that was as good as, if not better than, machinery in real big theatres; and the Archduke Franzi was stage director and pulled the wires and produced regular thrillers for an awed audience. There was a play called "The Magician's Apprentice on His Journeys." The first scene was laid in the magician's cave, the second outside a city which afterwards was magnificently set on fire with alcohol; the third in a village which was inundated with real water; the fourth in a dark forest haunted by brigands. It was

very wonderful and just perfect, and everything was presented exactly as it should be, and nothing was left to imagination.

Sometimes after dinner there were games. Count Coronini produced an interesting new apparatus consisting of a box with two peepholes in it, which one had to hold up against the light and shake and peer in, and the most marvellous patterns would appear, in all colours of the rainbow and a few more, and one shook it again, and presently the pattern disappeared and another came into sight, sudden and tender and dreamlike. Or else Grandma would come, and the big albums would be brought in by Count Coronini or Herr Wittek or Monsieur Grosselet, and everybody looked at pictures of beautiful foreign cities like Munich, which was mamma's town, and Rome, where the Holy Father dwelt, and Paris, which was said to be very wicked, though why and how it was not stated; but loveliest of them all was Venice, of which somebody or other said that it was the brightest jewel in the Austrian crown; and Franzi who knew that he was going to wear that crown when he grew up, wondered what that brightest jewel was like. The pictures were most instructive.

When Maxi had the measles, he was quarantined on an upper story of the palace, and every day Franzi reported to him all that happened, in the most accurate matter-of-fact manner imaginable. To do so was not an easy job, either, what with the whole day carefully planned down to the minute; but sometimes Franzi would help himself with little ruses; for instance, he would persuade Monsieur Grosselet to go out horseback-riding, and then there was time for writing letters, and what was more important and amusing still, for drawing pictures, which was a decidedly more thrilling way to

The Archduke Francis Joseph at the Age of Five

After the painting by Daffinger

The Archduke Francis Joseph, Aged 8, with His Brothers, Max and Charles Louis, and His Sister, Marianne

Lithograph by Kriehuber, 1838

pass the time than delving into the tedious secrets of French irregular verbs.

The pictures were the chief thing. As often as he could Franzi drew a sketch of one or other of the teachers, or of sailors and brigands read about in a book, or of the English governess Talbot, seen on the bastion during a walk, who wore, "1. a half-torn hat perhaps 10 years old, 2. badly arranged curls hanging all over the face, 3. mangy old fur, 4. shabby old dress." Sometimes there were no drawings enclosed; the artist had had no inspiration, and said so.

Conscientious little catalogues those letters were. The fare of the *goûters* was analyzed, both qualitatively and quantitatively; the puns of Keller, the lackey who waited at table, were recorded; and a postscript was added about a little dog which Franzi had seen in town that morning: it was howling pitifully, having been run over by a carriage. But there were still more romantic events to relate, as the following letter testifies:

> DEAR MAXI:
>
> By today's letter I shall tell you a little story which was read to us by Count Morzin; the numerous pirates who used to molest the travellers on their way to Java have been driven away, but a new kind of plague is spreading all over the forests of this region, to wit, orang-outans, also baboons; these beasts have already injured very many travellers by throwing down on them branches and cocoanuts. One day the daughter of the commander of a town started out toward another town, to see a relation; she was carried in a sedan by two badly armed natives. As they were passing through a forest many orang-outans appeared, and threw branches, rocks and fruits on the sedan, until the latter was shattered, the bearers took to

flight, but the poor girl was dragged by the apes up a tree, where she was liberally fed on cocoanuts. At last she was freed after she had spent 3 hours on this tree.

I hope dear Maxi that this story will cheer you up a bit.

Farewell dear brother.

Franz.

Many greetings to the Counts and Wittek.

Out of these letters emerges the picture of a bright, sweet-tempered and well-bred little boy and a happy and harmonious childhood. Yet, in the perspective of our knowledge, behind them looms the shadow of tragedy. For the dearest Maxi whom Franzi is trying to amuse with accounts of tremendous cake feasts, stories about pirates and baboons and funny drawings of horses and colonels and English governesses, was to grow up into that Archduke Maximilian whom the young Emperor Francis Joseph would treat with a cold and exacting superiority verging on contempt, and who sought to escape that treatment by plunging into his mad Aztec adventure.

"I shall contribute to your entertainment as much as I can," wrote Franzi, aged eight, to Maxi, aged six; but less than thirty years later the Emperor of Austria contributed nothing to the rescue of the Emperor of Mexico from death at the hands of Juarez.

III

If one compares the letters of the Archduke Franz written in his sixth year with those written at eleven or twelve, one will be struck by the strange discovery that

the boy made hardly any progress in the intervening years. His common sense and his self-possession were precocious at eleven; but so they were five years earlier. He was still the same model little boy who never forgot to "lay himself at the feet" of mother or grandmother, nor to include his best regards for the Counts Bombelles and Ledochowsky. Instead of the donkey caps made by Hahnenkamm the butler, in which he romped about with the Falkenhayn boys after *goûter* "until we all laughed ourselves sick," he now reports of trousers and waistcoats "in the latest patterns," and instead of shooting a toy fortress to pieces with a toy gun in the nursery he now has real artillery drill with a real miniature cannon in the Boulingrin, or bear grove, of the park at Schönbrunn. These are differences of matter, not of manner—purely external differences, that is to say.

The boy of six wrote like a boy of twelve because he thought like a boy of twelve. But if the boy of twelve sometimes wrote like a young man of twenty-two it was because he had listened to the talk of grown-up people and learnt, unconsciously, some of their phrases by heart. The couples at a garden party were not simply dancing to the tunes of Lanner; they were "stimulated to dance by the music of Herr Lanner." And

> "the beautiful festival of the Procession of Corpus Christi Day was observed with the usual pomp and circumstance . . . but one great attraction was missing, to wit, the ladies, who in the absence of the Empress could not march in the parade."

Thus speaks not a child's spontaneous fancy, but its drilled memory. A too impressionable memory is a dangerous gift. "It is all mechanical," the Emperor Joseph had written of the accomplishments of his nephew

Francis, "taking dictation, as it were—no ideas, no style of his own, either in writing or in speech. . . . "

Old Vienna lives and breathes in these boyhood letters. Franzi has visitors—the cousins from Milan, children of the Viceroy, Archduke Rainer; late in the afternoon they go over to the Kaisergarten, where a juggler is performing wonderful tricks; he has some trained birds which similarly perform wonderful tricks. Franzi does not say so, but one may readily imagine the curious and kindly Viennese forgetting all about the conjurer and his fowl and gaping in awe-stricken happiness at the party of the little Highnesses.

They go to see a "great spectacular play" entitled "The Treachery of the Moors at Granada" at the Theater an der Wien. All the riders of Herr Guerra's troupe appear, representing both Spanish and Moorish knights; there are about thirty horses on the stage, and many soldiers on foot; pitched battles are fought, and as grand finale a quadrille is done on horseback; "Herr Gammerler played the Duke of Cadix, and was very good." But theatrical criticism must be cut short as Count Coronini wants to impart a piece of news to Count Ledochowsky (Maxi's governor): the Lieutenant-Generals Martinitz, the Duke of Saxe-Coburg, Csorich, Künigl and Trapp have been promoted to Generals of Ordnance.

A charming ball is given by the Metternichs; after the dance a "very nice and very good" *goûter* is served; three tables are spread; at the first the Archdukes are seated, at the second, "we children," at the third, the ladies of the court; unfortunately "we children" had to leave "this abode of pleasure" right after *goûter* was over; still they could see the beautiful illumination lighted on the terrace in front of the villa; all the flower-beds are studded with many multi-coloured little lights, and there

are big vases faintly aglow as if with secret fire, and Chinese lanterns swing to the distant sound of music over the garden paths as people are stepping through the open French windows for a walk in the summer night.

IV

Colonel Hauslab was one of the best officers of the Austrian army; a scholar of many-sided accomplishments and a thoroughly modern outlook. No better selection might have been made for the important post of military instructor to thirteen-year-old Archduke Franz. He taught the little heir to the throne the elements of military theory, while officers of the various arms were assigned to give him a thorough practical training. He was successively put through the drills of infantry, cavalry, artillery and engineers. Nor were things made easy for His Imperial Highness; he was worked like any conscript, and he liked it. It was an accomplished subaltern who, ascending the throne at eighteen, became Supreme War Lord of one of the greatest armies of the contemporary world.

Hauslab found Franzi an excellent pupil—perhaps a little too excellent. The boy was serious far beyond his age; thoroughly practical, and filled with an uncompromising sense of duty. But he was extremely reserved, silent, grave, almost morose; he bore the stamp of Coronini's stern régime. He was slender and lithe, rather on the tall side; he possessed physical courage, with a flavour, however, of sticking to the job rather than of native dash. He had a curious dislike for horses; he was intensely miserable when in the yard of the Josefstadt cavalry barracks he took his first riding lesson on an ordinary trooper horse, and his riding master feared he would never come up to the mark. The riding master was

wrong; he did not allow for psychology. The boy who was afraid of his mount became in later years, by dint of sheer will power and application, one of the finest horsemen in Europe.

What the Archduke Franz was lacking in was imagination and initiative. One day he had to compose an essay on Schönbrunn and Laxenburg, the two summer residences of the Imperial family situated near Vienna.

> "Very different, indeed," he wrote, "are these two gardens in almost all of their parts. He who loves the magnificent, the imperial, the symmetric, the fixed forms, will be attracted more by Schönbrunn than by Laxenburg; for him who prefers variety, friendliness, the water, nature itself, Laxenburg will have more charm. As to myself, I shall always prize Schönbrunn higher than Laxenburg."

In a letter to an imaginary friend on "How to Make Good Progress in Your Studies," Franzi advises that the first thing to do is

> "to note well all the principal points of what the teacher says, all the different rules, and try to explain everything by these rules, and not in the way that seems the easiest to you. If for instance you have a problem to solve, think quickly of all the rules that apply to it. When you have found the right rule, try to solve the problem by its aid."

To the end of his days the Emperor Francis Joseph stuck to that prescription—just as he remained ever faithful to his preference for "the magnificent, the imperial, the symmetric, the fixed forms," of Schönbrunn over the romantic jumble of Laxenburg. At the age of thirteen the future monarch did not envisage a case to which

none of the known rules would apply, and his teachers omitted telling him what to do in such an emergency. That omission pursued Francis Joseph to the grave.

V

He was not quite a year old when he was taken for the first time to Ischl, the traditional summer resort of the Habsburgs. He repeated that trip at least once a year through a life spanning eighty-six. Ischl is a little old world town on the river Traun in Upper Austria, situated in the heart of the beautiful lake country known as the Salzkammergut. It is surrounded by tall mountains covered with lovely pine forests and topped by snowy peaks, and it is one of the most charming spots in Europe.

Today it takes seven hours for the none too fast Austrian fast train to reach Ischl from Vienna. In the days of Francis Joseph's childhood the trip took over twenty-four hours. A full day on the dusty and stony Austrian post roads, in a light travelling coach dashing at a mad gallop in the stifling heat, may have been rather distressing to adults; to a boy of twelve it must have meant endless delight. The journey of the imperial court was a most elaborate affair, with a procession of thirty or more coaches divided up into several sections so as not to occupy the whole length of the road. Horses were changed at frequent intervals, meals were provided at posthouses for everybody including Prince Hetzius the dog; guards of honour were drawn up in the garrison towns on the way, and during luncheon a military band played selections. All of which was most exciting. Sometimes the night was spent at a larger posthouse specially appointed to receive the august guests.

Those were happy times, the Archduke Franz's holidays at Ischl. Whether it was the brief recess at Easter,

or during the long summer vacation, the severe routine of Vienna was suspended. The days flew past in a thrilling sequel of pleasures. There were carriage rides to St. Wolfgang, where the party would embark on a little steamer and cross over to Falkenstein; and sometimes, as is the way of these mountain lakes, a storm would rise in no time, sweeping forward with an icy sudden blast from a corner of the sky which had been suspiciously white for a few minutes, a trap-door into space swung open on a horizon turned well-nigh black; and lightning would crack like a glistening whip around the gloomy peaks, and the ladies would scream as rough seas swamped the deck and sent little torrents down the companionway into the crowded saloon.

Or there would be foreign guests—the King of Prussia, for instance, with his stiff rattling suite of officers looking twice the life size; then a further set of excursions would be arranged—a drive to the Theresienfels near Strobel—no walks this time, for the Prussian ladies are bad pedestrians, especially the Countess Dönhof, who is tall and thin and a frightful bore. On the other hand, Fraülein von Marwitz, another Prussian lady-in-waiting, is big, young, and pretty—she is lots of fun. It is strange how sweet and jolly women can be—one hasn't noticed this before.

Mamma gives excellent dinners—Monsieur Narcisse is an artist, and the mellowest of native venison and giant brook trout from the Traun and lobster from the Adriatic and sturgeon from the Lower Danube appear on her table. Late in the evening tea is served, and there is gay conversation, and the picture albums are brought to the fore, and at ten o'clock the Archduke Franz partakes of a large glass of sour milk—the court physician Baron Gorigatti is a great partisan of sour milk—and then one retires to one's

Count Henry Bombelles, Francis Joseph's Governor

After a drawing of 1850

The Abbot (later Cardinal) Rauscher, one of
Francis Joseph's Tutors

Colonel Count Coronini, Francis Joseph's
First Military Instructor

own room which is right under the roof and where in the yellow shifting light of wax candles horrid ancestors frown from the walls upon a tired happy boy crawling into a tall feather bed.

But most glorious of all is the chamois shoot, when one is supposed to be called at half past three in the morning, but one isn't, for one has jumped out of bed a quarter of an hour earlier, all electrified with expectancy; a cold rub, a hurried glass of hot milk, and off the party dashes in charabancs through the thick mist, and up the mountain-side; an hour's ride, then two hours' climb to the shooting stand—and then a long breathless wait with the gamekeeper on one's side holding the reserve guns ready, and whispering patience. Then a faint red stripe would appear along the dark contour of the Hohe Schrott, rather like the stripe down a general's trouser seam, and would intensify into a crimson glow, and suddenly the mist would sink as if absorbed by thirsty rocks and trees and earth. Now one could hear the noise of the beaters from afar, and one cranes anxiously one's neck toward the hill on the left where the chamois are supposed to come. The banging now bursts forth quite close, and presently half a dozen chamois would dart out into the open, and stop, pricking their ears; then they descend the hill in big leaps toward the stands, but, bewildered by the echo, double their track and dash madly uphill toward the beaters. But they are met by another fleeing herd of animals frightened out of their wits by the din, and the newcomers, in confused despair, press the whole group toward the stands. One's attention is strained so one's brain almost snaps; the rumble of stones, set into motion by swift little hooves, sounds miles away although they roll straight under one's feet. *Now!* the branches part right in front of one's nose, and the wor-

ried little head of a chamois, with wiggling ears and trembling nostrils, thrusts out quite lightly, followed by a quivering flank. A report—"Well done, Your Imperial Highness," mutters a gamekeeper and sticks a green fir twig, mark of the successful shot, into one's hat, while blood gushes from the body of the little beast crumpled up in a hollow down yonder.

VI

In the autumn of 1845 the Archduke Franz was taken to Italy for the first time, and visited Venice. On his return to Vienna he recorded his impressions in an essay.

> "I have seen Venice, the goal of my desires," he wrote, "and I was enchanted by this wonderful city. . . . At four in the morning I was awakened by the gun fired from the flagship, and, lured by the first rays of the rising sun, I stepped to my window. The mist still clung heavily to the pane, but the white domes of Santa Maria Salute were tinged red by the sun, and on board the ships life was stirring; flags were run up, decks washed, laundry was being hung out on the spars to dry, and soon the loading and unloading of all kinds of merchandise began. As the mist was lifted one could see on the horizon a large number of fishing barks with sails fully spread, and now and then a larger ship bound for the harbour. . . .
>
> "Mid-day shows a different picture. Light gondolas, propelled with great speed by slim oarsmen, zigzag their way among the shipping and through the canals. The shouts of the gondolieri demanding the right of way, the cries of all kinds of peddlers offering their ware, and the disgusting screaming and whistling of little guttersnipes laying on the streets pierce the air. Here a hawker of brandy praises his stuff, there a dirty peasant woman lures some children with a baked squash;

an old fisherman displays basketfuls of small fish and mussels. . . .

"Toward eight in the evening the whole world goes to St. Mark's Square. . . . The whole is paved with great coloured slabs like a room in an Italian palace—when the gaslights are all lit the square looks like a solemnly illuminated hall. The crowds walk to and fro, many are seated in the cafés, the military band plays—it is just like being at a ball. . . ."

VII

The good Aja's little darling was sixteen now, and a colonel of cavalry. But this colonel of cavalry had to spend ten hours a day, more or less, in the classroom. There were now new subjects added to the old list—philosophy and political science. His instructor in philosophy was the Abbot Rauscher, a young priest of extraordinary zeal, great erudition, fervid eloquence—handsome, dashing, magnetic. His father, a state official of middle rank brought up in the liberal irreligious spirit of the Josephine age, intended him for the study of law and the civil service. Othmar scandalized his parents by announcing his decision to become a priest. Old Hofrat Rauscher worried himself to death over his erratic son, and the mother, all her powers of suasion and imprecation having failed, applied, as a last resort, for an audience with the Emperor Francis. In a shaking tearful voice the poor lady besought His Majesty—told him that she was positively frightened by her boy's religious passion, and would His Majesty be pleased to tell that headstrong bad boy to mind his mother and devote himself to the service of the State, as his father had done. To that monarch religious zeal appeared just as suspicious as zeal of any other kind; for a zealot was a man apt to do

almost anything, including starting a revolution. His Majesty listened graciously, and said: "All right, my good woman, I shall have the police look into the matter."

The police may have looked, but Othmar did not mind. He set his will through, was ordained, and made a meteoric career. He was still a young man when, as Abbot and headmaster of the Oriental Academy,[1] he was summoned to court to be one of the Archduke Franz's professors. He was regarded as the most brilliant and uncompromising exponent of the school, revolutionary from the orthodox Austrian official point of view, which strove for the overthrow of the Josephine ecclesiastic policy, the full restoration of Papal jurisdiction in clerical matters, and the ascendancy of canonic over civil law. In this he found himself in agreement with Metternich, who was his patron, and with the Ajo Primo, Count Bombelles.

The young Archduke's first teacher in political science, the Hofrat Jarcke, was also a *protégé* of the Chancellor's. Jarcke had succeeded Friedrich von Gentz as chief of propaganda at the Foreign Office. Like Gentz, he was a Prussian by birth; unlike Gentz, he was not a brilliant pamphleteer but a dull professor; unlike Gentz, he did not remain loyal to his Lutheran religion, but embraced Catholicism, and, as it often happens in such cases, became more papal than the Pope himself. His manner and views of an assessor of the Holy Inquisition were so distasteful to the straightforward soldierly mind of Count Coronini, that for once the Colonel put down his foot and made an issue. He was supported by the Archduchess Sophie, who, rather an ultramontane herself, was linked up with the quasi-semi-liberal Count Kolowrat by their common dislike of the Chancellor.

[1] The training school for the Austrian diplomatic service at Vienna.

Jarcke's appointment, already signed, was countermanded, and the Archduke Franz was initiated into politics by Pilgram, a bureaucrat of the orthodox Josephine cut.

It was probably due to the same influences as had thwarted Jarcke's elevation that, although the Abbot Rauscher was an eminent authority on canonic law, that important subject was entrusted to the much more moderate Canon Joseph Columbus of St. Stephen's Cathedral, Vienna. Still, Rauscher was assigned to read English constitutional history with the Archduke, and it is easy to imagine how Whigs and Protestants and parliamentarians fared at the hands of this fanatical Catholic and upholder of divine right.

Thus the two opposing tendencies which, fighting for ascendency in the Austrian government, overflowed into the education of the future Emperor, worked out, by their impact, a compromise. But it was a typical Austrian, a Habsburg, compromise—not a merging of differences, but their side-by-side survival; not a settlement of issues, but their postponement; not a golden mean, but a half-way thing. The Chancellor Metternich, who himself in the two years preceding Francis Joseph's accession instructed the young heir in practical politics; then Bombelles, and Rauscher, represented the ultramontane school, advocating reactionary despotism in the State under the guidance of a Church ruled by Jesuits. Coronini, Pilgram and Hauslab, on the other hand, championed the Josephine system in which the State was omnipotent and the Church a mere arm of the temporal power. The ultramontanes at the same time favoured federalism and aristocratic privilege, whereas the party of Josephinism was centralist and, to an extent, liberal and equalitarian.

Half a century earlier the good and wise Archduke

Charles warned his imperial brother against half-measures as the fatal poison pervading the Austrian body politic. Francis heeded that warning as little as a hundred others. "The System" which spoke with Metternich's voice but gripped with Francis's hand lived and breathed in half-measures as a fish lives and breathes in water. It was the old Habsburg curse which brooded over the education of Habsburg's young hope and left its fatal mark on his unfolding character.

CHAPTER VI

THE STORM

I

The inevitable, so long staved off, knocked on the door at last. On February 24, 1848, the people of Paris rose and despatched the Bourgeois King, Louis-Philippe, along the road of his predecessor Charles X. Once more France was a republic. Once more her example stirred a continent, benumbed by two decades of *pax Metternichiana,* to feverish unrest. The Habsburg Empire cracked loudly in its joints. Italy and Hungary were swept by hot gusts of revolt. Vienna responded with a stock exchange panic. The credit of the Government, shaky even during top periods of political stability, took its long overdue downward plunge. All ears seemed to hear the death knell of the celebrated "system." In the heart of the city a large poster exaggerated the hope of multitudes into a prophecy: "Within a month the Prince Metternich will be overthrown. Long live Constitutional Austria."

The capital seethed with assemblies and petitions. There was talk, and more than talk, of organizing an armed National Guard of citizens and students. From the proletarian depths of the outlying districts ominous rumblings emanated; for the February Revolution witnessed the *début* of the red flag of Socialism on the

Paris barricades. All Vienna felt that something was bound to happen; the question was only, what, and how soon.

The portents spoke clearly; but at the Austrian Court only a very few understood their language. One of these few was the Archduchess Sophie. She trembled for her boy's estate. She did not love the people; she did not understand democracy; but she was a realist; she knew that a few timely concessions might avert a catastrophe. She threw herself at the Archduke Louis's feet. The fat Regent grinned. "What does a woman know about these things!" The Archduke John, issuing from his Styrian exile like a bear leaving his cave at the approach of spring, was no more successful. Louis did not wish to act, and saw therefore no reason for action.

Metternich's answer to the harbingers of storm was a bulletin. On March 10 the official gazette declared that Austria felt herself strong enough to cope with all attempts at overthrowing law and order. In other words no concessions were to be made. Even a dyed-in-the-wool conservative like the Staatsrat Jarcke, Metternich's own candidate for the Archduke Franz's professor in political science, was perplexed by such obstinacy. "He who in times like these does not want reforms wants revolution," he said, repeating in essence the bitter remark of his predecessor Gentz that Metternich was the worst revolutionary of all. In the House of Commons Lord Palmerston lashed the Chancellor's folly. Metternich, he said, regards himself as the champion of law and order simply because he stubbornly clings to the status quo. That is not true conservatism. Conservatism does not mean immovability. Isn't it better, the noble lord asked, to meet the inevitable half way, to grant concessions betimes and with a good grace, than to have them

Two Drawings by the Archduke Francis Joseph, Aged 15

1845

The Archduke Francis Joseph at 16

Drawing by Artlinger

Collection of National-Bibliothek, Vienna

forced upon one by a revolution? When the speech was reported to Metternich he declared that Palmerston was an ignorant fool.

Vienna was in ferment. But Metternich still refused to see. On the 11th his omnipotent Chief of Police, Count Sedlnitzky, assured him that nothing would happen. But on the 12th something did happen, and in an unexpected quarter too. The State Conference, considering what stand should be taken in regard to the Lower Austrian Estates which threatened to join the popular movement, overruled the proposal of the Archduke Louis to have them tried by court-martial, and decided to call an assembly of the States for the next day.

The date was ominous. It was the Thirteenth of March, birthday of the Emperor Joseph II, hated despot once, but now the idol of awakened masses. Throughout Sunday the capital throbbed in fever. One of the ambassadors, whose windows faced the court of the Provincial Estates, invited his colleagues to watch the fun as from box seats. Strangely enough, the police took no special precautions. Had the time-honoured principle of nipping disturbances in the bud been abandoned? Buds there were aplenty, but the nippers nipped not. What happened? The police stood under the supreme control of the Minister of Interior, Count Kolowrat. He had minute knowledge of the plans of the popular party, partly from his host of spies, partly from his friends the liberal leaders. Yet he failed to act. *Yet?* Consequently, perhaps. He had fought Metternich for a quarter century, and could not down him. Did he perceive that his chance lay in giving the street one? If that be a mere surmise, at least it cannot be disproved.

On the morning of Monday the thirteenth the people of Vienna flooded the streets. The building of the Pro-

vincial Estates was an island amidst a seething sea of wrought-up humanity. Heavy sticks and bags filled with cobblestones were seen; there was much shouting and pushing, cheering and hooting, waving of hats and shaking of fists as members of the Assembly navigated their way toward the hall. But Vienna crowds are good-natured. Perhaps nothing of particular import would have happened had not Metternich, early in the afternoon, lost his nerve. He ordered the military to clear the courtyard of the Provincial Estates. A thin white line of infantry tried to press the crowd back. Oaths flew; then stones; there was a scuffle, and suddenly, upon a shrill command, a volley crackled. For a second the mob swerved as men dropped right and left, splashing their neighbours' faces and clothes with their blood; then, with an angry roar, it surged forward, and before night fell the System was swept into limbo.

It was that command to open fire that turned the Thirteenth of March from a row into a revolution. The small military force in the inner city was squashed by the sheer weight of the mob; from the outskirts armed bands of students and workers streamed towards the centre, and by the evening the National Guard, composed of citizens and undergraduates, had full control of the city. The Provincial Estates joined the revolution in a body.

In the Imperial Palace the State Conference was harangued by the Archduke John. "Metternich must go!" Count Kolowrat seconded. The Archduchess Sophie pulled wires feverishly.

Metternich sat at his desk at the Foreign Office. A delegation of estates and burghers was arguing him into resignation. "We have nothing against your person, Prince, but everything against your system," a grey-

haired alderman remonstrated. Outside an hysterical mob was howling. "Down with Metternich! String him up! On the lamp-post with him!" A group, armed with sabres and carbines, fierce with beards and sashes and broad-brimmed Carbonaro hats, invaded the lobby. Their leader shouted: "Another five minutes, and I shall vouch for nothing!" It was a young lawyer named Alexander Bach, prominent in the revolutionary councils. Not a muscle moved in Metternich's face. He walked to the door and opened it. "Another five minutes—" The Prince turned toward the committee. "If you believe," he said calmly, "that my continuation in office may imperil the welfare of the monarchy, it is no sacrifice for me to resign."

For the first time in his life Metternich paid heed to what others believed. In that moment, had he been sincere, he would have been truly great. But even then he was play-acting; his dignity cloaked an effort to gain time; the noble flow of his gesture was sustained by the inner certainty that he had not said the last word yet.

The news of Metternich's fall sent the capital into a delirium of joy. The Fiend was destroyed; salvation was close at hand. Strangers embraced and kissed each other in the streets; crowds, drunk with the vision of the new freedom, marched through the town, singing and cheering. In the inner city the burghers lighted candles in their windows. The very skies were illuminated by a festive red glow. It came from the outlying districts where the workers celebrated by setting fire to a few factories and customs houses.

II

The morrow brought a brief lull. Two thousand substantial citizens enrolled in the National Guard; the

students also armed themselves; it was felt that the great trial of strength was still impending. One piece of news was ominous. The Prince Windischgraetz, military governor of Prague, had arrived at court post haste. He was known as an arch reactionary, a sworn enemy of the people, a bully, and a despot; his amiable qualities had earned for him the sobriquet of "Duke of Alba in the vestpocket." He was now to replace in command the Archduke Albrecht who on the night before had admitted the National Guard into the inner city. His appointment signified that the court braced itself for resistance. In the afternoon, however, it was announced that the State Conference granted one of the principal demands of the people, press freedom. The truth of the matter was that the Government was in a blue funk; never very firm of purpose, with the retirement of Metternich it had lost that obstinacy which in better times used to do duty as determination. A week ago this concession, half-measure though it was, would have been hailed by the masses as a great achievement; now it meant nothing.

But bewilderment was not confined to the precincts of Government. The revolution, still far from its goal, was already being threatened from the rear. Toward nightfall gangs of marauders looted shops in the suburbs. It was feared that the proletariat would rise and turn not only against the court but against the liberal bourgeoisie and all organized government as well. The political revolt was on the point of merging into class war. Detachments of the National Guard were sent out to the faubourgs to restore order. One of these flying columns was commanded by the young lawyer Bach who on the night before had led the invasion of the Chancellery.

In the Hofburg chaos reigned. The Emperor lay ill;

all approaches to his sick room were jealously guarded lest some emissary or committee of revolutionists should gain entrance and wheedle Ferdinand into signing a constitution, or his own abdication, or a manifesto proclaiming the republic. For a moment Prince Windischgraetz controlled the situation. He drew up a proclamation imposing martial law and warning the people of Vienna that anybody who did anything was to be shot on the spot. Copies of this document were already being placarded in town when, owing principally to the effort of the Archduchess Sophie, the party of moderation gained the upper hand. After midnight the Emperor signed another manifesto calling an assembly of the people's representatives, to convene as an advisory body, without powers of legislation. This proclamation, with a clause lifting the state of siege, was posted all over Vienna at dawn; in some places its copies covered up Windischgraetz's blood-and-iron message; in others the latter was overlooked, and in the morning perplexed citizens could read both side-by-side.

But it was too late to stem the tide. Early on March 15 a citizens' committee invaded City Hall, turned out the burgomaster and seized the municipal administration under the protection of the National Guard which now occupied all strategic points in town. The committee was headed by the young lawyer Bach who two nights before would give Metternich five minutes only to clear out. He now became virtual dictator of the capital. None among his fellow-revolutionists was better qualified for the post. He was clever and quick, an excellent organizer, above all, poised and cool-headed; in the midst of street fighting he had sat down on a heap of flagstones and, with bullets hissing past, drew up, in a firm hand, a schedule of measures to restore order once the revolution

succeeded. In the last two days he had proved that he was at his best when everybody else had lost his head.

The Imperial Palace was beleaguered by impatient masses which cheered the Emperor as he drove out, but refused to disperse until, in the afternoon, Ferdinand signed another manifesto granting all the important demands of the people. In the evening a third proclamation followed, expressing the Emperor's all-highest pleasure over the loyalty of the Viennese and his all-highest hope that they would continue in their most praiseworthy behaviour. Thus the revolution became respectable; and the good Viennese exultantly told one another that there was no people in the world that could conduct a rebellion so beautifully—why, even His Majesty liked it! Everybody was happy except a few professional skeptics like the dramatist Grillparzer who said that the whole affair was a tragic farce, and that soon there would be an awful awakening; but nobody listened to him.

III

The revolution triumphed; but peace was not yet in sight. The complete lack of political schooling, evil heritage of intermittent oppression and pampering, now bore bitter fruit. The people of Austria got what it wanted, but had not the slightest idea as to what to do with it. A story illustrates the confusion into which their sudden prosperity had thrown the revolutionists. One of their principal demands which the Emperor had granted was for a parliament of one chamber only, elected by popular suffrage and unchecked by an upper house of a more conservative composition. One day an excited young man blew into the Café Adami, headquarters of the radicals, and shouted: "One chamber we've got already—but we

shan't rest until we have squeezed the second out of them, too!" The good soul was under the impression that if one chamber was a good thing two chambers were twice as good.

Moreover, antagonism rapidly developed between the liberal nobility and bourgeoisie who were quite contented with the achievements of the March days, and the radical left wing, with republican and communist leanings, who regarded those achievements as a mere beginning. Early in April a Liberal cabinet was appointed with Baron Pillersdorf as Premier. A few weeks later Pillersdorf published the draft of a new constitution modelled along Belgian lines. The liberals were delighted; but the radicals, or, as they were called, democrats, would not hear of it and demanded the election of a constituent assembly. Their mood grew more militant every day; and it was ominous that Alexander Bach, who after the victory of March had gradually edged away from his left wing associations and joined the supporters of law and order, now declined the ministerial post offered to him by Pillersdorf. Extremely sensitive to the slightest vibrations of public sentiment, with an almost uncanny accuracy in judging what was good for his own career, the ambitious young attorney realized that once more the party of revolt was the better bet. He gambled well. On May 15 there was another outbreak; armed students and workers invaded the Hofburg and compelled, musket in hand, the Emperor to grant the radical charter.

Two days later the Emperor Ferdinand and his family drove out to Schönbrunn. When they reached the Summer Palace they did not halt; instead, the coachmen and grooms whipped their horses into a mad gallop. On and on the wild ride went westward and never stopped until Innsbruck, the capital of Tyrol, some two hundred

miles from Vienna. This looked like a flight; in reality it was an abduction. Ferdinand did not want to go. He liked the revolution. It was lots of fun—all those processions with all sorts of new flags and banners which he had never seen before, and music every day, and now and then a little jolly shooting just as if it were his birthday; and the people who waited on him in little groups (*Ausschuss* they called themselves—what a silly word: like shooting out something—poof! boom!) were really very nice—they looked so gay with their beards, and broad-brimmed hats, and multicoloured sashes, and sabres; they were much nicer than all those tedious generals and chamberlains with their stiff clean-shaven long faces. And they wanted him to sign papers, which was really quite easy, and when he signed them they always looked so happy, and gave such a nice hearty cheer. It seemed to Ferdinand that Vienna had never been so entertaining as during this—what do you call it—revolution. He did not want to go to Innsbruck, dash it all!

But the court party was relentless. It was relentless because it was scared. The events of the Fifteenth of May opened up a new chapter in the, to that date, rather harmless Vienna revolution. The fatal word constituent assembly, with its suggestion of 1789 and after, fell. For the first time the sovereignty of the people was recognized. This sort of thing had to stop; it was not a question any more of the degree and extent of concessions, but of the very existence of the monarchy.

The news of the Emperor's flight burst over Vienna like a bomb. At first an official communiqué announced that considerations of health had prompted His Majesty's withdrawal to the mountains of Tyrol; but a few days later an imperial manifesto was less disingenuous. It accused the Viennese of rank ingratitude. The Emperor

had to leave the capital because "the faction of anarchy, and a few detachments of the National Guard, sorely oblivious of their accustomed loyalty," had attempted to deprive him of his freedom and to establish a dictatorship.

Popular sentiment now curiously veered about. To the perplexity of the upper classes came the repentance of the lower. Exile surrounded Ferdinand with the halo of a martyr. Had he not ever been a friend of the people? Had he not from the outset granted every demand if it only could be brought before him? Facts of his kindliness were decked out with rumour. In those agitated March days, folks said, when his generals pressed him for measures of blood and iron, he repeated over and over again: "I won't let you shoot at 'em." And when his ministers insisted that he must not sign the manifesto promising a constitution, he exclaimed: "But I want to sign it! Am *I* the Emperor, or are you?" Verily, Ferdinand was a good ruler; the Viennese had fought *his* battle against his evil counsellors. Such, indeed, was his popularity that on that fateful Fifteenth of May the barricade erected at the upper end of the Graben was called Emperor's Barricade, and was adorned with his portrait.

While public opinion was thus slowly drifting toward the right, the liberals continued negotiations with the court at Innsbruck. The Pillersdorf cabinet, but a few weeks old, died of infantile paralysis. On July 8 a new liberal government was formed under the premiership of Baron Wessenberg, a veteran diplomat raised in the Josephine tradition of enlightenment. The portfolio of justice was offered to Bach. After some hesitancy, taken seriously by nobody, he accepted. Once more he was the man of authority and law and order. Only a month before he had declared in an address that on May

15 the people "pronounced their will in the legible writing of the barricades." Now he astounded his former comrades by his determined championship of monarchic stability. Revolution had lifted him on its crest to his pinnacle; now he sought to calm the wave lest it should wash him away. "We must openly declare," he said after a clash between citizens' guards and workers, "that we stand on the basis of monarchy, and that we shall not tolerate republican and anarchistic tendencies."

On July 22 the Archduke John, now rehabilitated in triumph, opened the first Austrian parliament. He had been elected Regent of the German Empire by the National Assembly sitting at Frankfort, and this was regarded as a good portent, a token of the unity of dawning constitutionalism in Germany and in Austria. That the Reichstag met in the so-called Spanish Riding School, a beautiful baroque hall devoted to the training of horses and performances in equestrian art, was not thought ominous.

The proceedings of the first Austrian legislature unfolded as a chaotic farce. The delegates had not the slightest experience in parliamentary business. Most of them were ingrained doctrinaires, unwilling to sacrifice an iota of ideological trimmings for a working compromise. Most serious of all difficulties was the bitter enmity separating Czechs and Germans. One achievement stands out on the credit side of the balance of this ill-fated assembly: the law relieving the peasantry of the feudal services with which their lands were still burdened. The tithe and corvée, which the serfs liberated from chattel bondage by Joseph II still owed the lord of the manor, were now abolished. The proprietors were compensated by bonds, while their feudal jurisdiction was taken over by the state.

This law was an excellent piece of work; but its adoption had fatal consequences. To the peasantry, which so far had supported the liberals of Vienna, the abolition of feudal services meant the practical purpose and moral contents of the revolution. Once it was achieved, they lost interest in the further fates of the reform movement, and before long became the chief supporters of reaction.

One issue that arose in the course of the discussion was whether the law should be submitted for the imperial signature. The democrats maintained that to do so would be tantamount to renouncing the sovereignty of the people. On the other hand, the liberals and, of course, the loyalist Right, argued that not to apply for the Emperor's approval would be equivalent to the abolition of the monarchy. The democrats were defeated on the main issue, but they carried their amendment striking the words "by the grace of God" from the Emperor's title in the preamble.

IV

"They refuse to hear of the grace of God, they will have to hear of the grace of guns," Prince Windischgraetz burst out when he learned of the debate in Parliament. This was no empty swagger. While at the Spanish Riding School in Vienna the representatives of the people's might and majesty were having their fun, counter-revolution was rallying on all fronts, and Windischgraetz was its standard-bearer.

On Whitmonday, June 12, Prague, the capital of Bohemia, revolted. Exactly what precipitated the outbreak has never been cleared up. Prince Windischgraetz was issuing orders when his young wife, who watched the skirmishing from a window of the palace, was hit by a stray bullet and died instantly. For weeks

Windischgraetz had yearned for an opportunity to settle accounts with the disloyalists. Now he had it. He withdrew his troops from the city, and by a few hours' vigorous bombardment from the surrounding hills crushed the rebellion.

This was the first victory of the counter-revolution, and the turning-point of the year 1848. In the first pitched battle with regular troops the National Guards were mashed to porridge. Everywhere the confidence of reaction swelled. Windischgraetz now was established as the strong arm, the avenger, of Legitimacy. He was rewarded with a high decoration by the Emperor, and with another by the Czar of Russia.

A second, still more important triumph soon followed. On July 25 the old Field-Marshal Radetzky (he had fought Napoleon at Leipsic, and was eighty-two now) inflicted an overwhelming defeat on the army of Sardinia-Piedmont at Custoza. The gates of Milan and Venetia, where the rebels had established their control, now lay open to the Imperial troops. For the time being, at least, the Italian national movement was downed. No less significant was the effect of Radetzky's conquest at home. The impressionable Viennese forgot all about democracy, and turned loyalist. The black and yellow imperial flag was hoisted everywhere, supplanting the black-red-gold banner of German unity which by now had acquired distinctly republican associations.

The court lost no time in seizing its chance. On August 12 the imperial family returned to Vienna, notwithstanding Windischgraetz's protests, who first wanted to settle accounts with the revolution once for all. On his entry into the capital Ferdinand was wildly cheered. The Archduchess Sophie sat in her carriage with compressed lips, tears streaming down her face. They were

not, as the populace thought, tears of joy. She was desperate. She felt that the dynasty had delivered itself into the hands of the revolutionists—that they were all the prisoners of the Committee of Public Safety. At Innsbruck she had undergone a crucial change. The developments at Vienna—the immoderation, the utter lack of statesmanship exhibited by the radical Left, the helplessness and indecision of the constitutionalists, the unending petty quarrels of the different nationalities, the inefficiency of Parliament as a whole—all this had thoroughly cured her of such liberal sympathies as she ever entertained. It had never been her reason—it was her mother's instinct that had sided with the progressives; when she saw that her instinct had been betrayed she turned against them with a passion which was no more inhibited, as had been her support of their cause, by the ill-eased awareness of an unnatural association. In reality she felt relieved; washing her hands of "these people" almost gave her a sense of physical cleanliness; it was as if she had safely arrived at home after a precarious voyage. At Innsbruck her husband one day was receiving a Liberal delegation when she, present as usual, suddenly brushed him aside and scalded the unhappy committee with a white-hot shower of denunciation. There came a time when that incident, never forgotten, revived with a sinister relief in the memory of the Austrian people.

The Emperor's popularity wore off quickly. A few days after his return people once more cheered the republic as his carriage drove past. At a review of the National Guards he was greeted with the strains of the *Fuchslied*, the famous undergraduate song referring in the most irreverent fashion to his late Majesty the Emperor Francis, Ferdinand's father. A violent republican and communist agitation widened daily the

breach between liberals and radicals, bourgeoisie and proletariat. The air was heavy with the forebodings of another crisis.

This time the spark that exploded the powder magazine blew over from Hungary. In that country the revolution, which on March 15 had swept away the old order, ensconced itself in a position incomparably stronger than in Austria. The Hungarian people possessed what the Austrian people did not: a leader of the first rank in the person of Louis Kossuth, a number of skilled politicians, and, most important of all, the political schooling of a constitutional evolution spanning centuries. On April 11 the monarch signed a series of new statutes incorporating all the popular demands: organization of a ministry responsible to Parliament, popular suffrage, abolition of feudal privileges, liberation of serfs, equality before the law, freedom of press, association, and assembly. Overnight Hungary was changed from a medieval into a modern commonwealth. Moreover, while up to this time Hungary had been governed, *de facto* if not *de jure*, as a province of the Austrian Empire, the new laws made her virtually independent. The Emperor of Austria was also King of Hungary, but otherwise the two countries were to be distinct entities.

These achievements, however, were vitiated by the short-sighted chauvinism of the Magyar leaders. Only one-half of the country's population belonged to the Magyar race; the other half was composed of Slavs and Roumanians. These peoples now demanded recognition of their racial rights and a share in the new Hungarian democracy proportionate to their numbers. But the Magyar politicians insisted on the purely Magyar character of the Hungarian state and refused to grant concessions of any kind to the non-Magyar groups. The

Serbs of Southern Hungary replied by taking up arms. Their movement aroused strong sympathies in the kindred people of Croatia, a province of the Hungarian realm enjoying a considerable measure of autonomy. Its governor, the Imperial General Baron Jellačić, was a gifted and ambitious man, one of the few who in these muddled times knew what they wanted. Fervent champion of the South Slav national aspirations, and at the same time inspired by a fierce loyalty to the Emperor, he set as his aim the organization of a South Slav state within the Austrian Empire, uniting all the Croat, Serb and Slovene subjects of both Hungary and Austria proper, and eventually including the Serbians, then still under Ottoman suzerainty. As Banus (this was the Hungarian title of the Governor of Croatia) Jellačić was also commander-in-chief of the troops stationed in that province, and thus occupied a most important strategic position. He possessed the full confidence of the Archduchess Sophie, to whose influence, indeed, he owed his appointment at this critical juncture.

The Hungarian Government despatched troops to suppress the Serb rebellion and to prevent the Croats from crossing the Drave River and coming to the assistance of their kinsmen. Not all of these troops were Hungarian. After the proclamation of the April laws the Hungarian Government required all Imperial regiments garrisoned in the country to take an oath on the new constitution. This was a clever stroke, as it presently developed. Both the Serbs and the Croats protested that in opposing the Hungarian Government they merely acted as loyal subjects of the Emperor, in defence of the unity of the Empire which the Magyars threatened to disrupt. Now, while the Magyar troops marched against the Serb rebels with great enthusiasm the com-

manders of the Austrian regiments had scruples, and applied for instructions to Vienna. They were told to obey the orders of the Hungarian Minister of War, as they were bound by their oath on the Hungarian constitution.

It was a most anomalous situation; for the court could not but sympathize with the South Slav upheaval. Jelačić now decided on a daring step. On June 16 he arrived at Innsbruck at the head of a large Croatian delegation. In a public audience attended by the whole Imperial family, all ministers and court dignitaries, he besought the Emperor not to allow the Hungarians to crush his people and to shatter the unity of the Empire. His plea glowed with Austrian patriotism; he was an exceptionally handsome man, tall and slender, with dark hair, deep-set dark eyes, a Roman profile, and pale complexion; his sonorous baritone quivered with emotion. The Archdukes and ministers were impressed; the Archduchesses wept. He carried the day. The Emperor assured him of his good will; the Empress Maria Anna and the Archduchess Sophie showered signs of their favour upon him. He left Innsbruck in the highest spirits. A day or so later, while changing horses at a posthouse, he picked up a Hungarian newspaper. The big type of the front page caught his eyes. Presently he was rubbing them wildly. No, it was impossible—yet it was there, black on white: an Imperial proclamation declaring him, the Banus Jellačić, a rebel and traitor, removing him from the governorship, and revoking his general's patent. He looked at the date. The newspaper was about a week old.

What had happened? Count Batthyány, the Hungarian Premier, had waited on the Emperor at Innsbruck about ten days prior to Jellačić's arrival. How he ob-

tained the proclamation from Ferdinand remains a mystery to this day; but it has been suggested that the Magyar statesman persuaded the Empress, who usually attended audiences to watch over her feeble-minded husband, that no affairs of state would be discussed this time. Thereupon the Empress left the room, and Batthyány easily prevailed upon Ferdinand to sign the paper which he had brought with him.

Ever since the Emperor's assassins entered Wallenstein's bedroom at Eger Castle Habsburg ingratitude had been proverbial. Still, the perfidy with which Jellačić, a faithful servant of his master if ever there was one, was now treated stood unparalleled even in Habsburg annals. The Governor, however, refused to be swerved. He persisted in his loyalty to his Sovereign even against the latter's will. And he knew that he had powerful friends.

At first the party of counter-revolution did not feel strong enough to declare openly for the loyal rebel. But after Radetzky's victories in Italy the *camarilla*, as the Archduchess Sophie's inner circle was called, decided that the time had come for a showdown. Presently an Imperial rescript reinstated Jellačić into all his honours and appointments, and extolled his gallantry and his devotion.

On September 11 the Croat army crossed the Drave into Hungary. It was a crazy tangle. "The King of Croatia declared war on the King of Hungary, the Emperor of Austria remained neutral, and yet these three monarchs were one and the same person." Jellačić's invasion marked the turning point in the Hungarian revolution. Up to that moment a peaceful solution, through reconciliation of nation and dynasty, could still be hoped for. Now the dice were cast. The counsellors of moderation, like the Premier Count Batthyány and Francis

Deak, saw themselves betrayed by the King in whose interest they had exerted themselves, and withdrew from the Government. Kossuth and the republican extremists gained full control. A national army was organized; a new national currency was issued. The Hungarian people prepared to fight all comers.

Still, in the last moment one more attempt was made to save peace. The Hungarian Parliament sent a delegation to the Vienna Reichstag with a request to mediate between the crown and the Hungarian people.

V

The Hungarian parliamentary mission met with a somewhat mixed reception at Vienna. While the German Left heartily supported its plea, the Slav parties, and more particularly the Czechs, flatly refused to give it hearing. They welcomed this opportunity for getting even with the oppressors of their kin. Besides, the Magyars were avowed allies of the Frankfort Parliament, whose programme called for a strong united Germany with the eventual inclusion of Austria. This German-Magyar alliance menaced the Czech dream of reorganizing the Habsburg Empire under Slav hegemony. The Czech group therefore allied itself with the loyalist Right in opposing the Hungarian appeal for mediation.

The consequences proved this Slav attitude a tragic mistake, an illustration of the truth that two wrongs never make a right. The Slavs of Hungary had real grievances, and Kossuth's intolerant policy toward the non-Magyar races was indefensible. But the Czechs in the Austrian parliament now had a splendid opportunity to bring the haughty Magyar leaders to reason. They might have said, "All right, we shall act as your

spokesmen at Court, if you in your turn will concede the just demands of our brethren." They, however, failed to avail themselves of their strategic position for constructive purposes, preferring to wreak their revenge on the hated master race. In vain a leader of the German liberals warned them, "If you now leave the Hungarians to their fate, the counter-revolution will first finish them and then swoop down on you." The Magyar request was voted down by a large majority, being supported only by the German liberals and the Poles.

The decision of the Reichstag burned Kossuth's bridges. It also precipitated another crisis in the Austrian capital. The Viennese democrats realized that the Hungarians were fighting *their* battle. If the *camarilla* succeeded in crushing the Magyar revolution all hopes for a constitutional régime in Austria would be gone too. Vienna was swept by a wave of pro-Magyar enthusiasm. Scores of Viennese, especially students, crossed the border to enroll in the Hungarian army which now had to face not only Jellačić's Croats and the Serb rebels, but the whole might of the Austrian Empire as well.

On October 6 Imperial troops were to leave Vienna for the Hungarian front. A crowd of armed burghers, students and workers, including detachments of the National Guard, gathered to prevent their departure. Fighting broke forth on several points. The troops were pressed back. A furious mob invaded the War Office, dragged the Minister of War, grey-haired General Count Latour, out on the street and literally tore him to pieces. The Minister of Justice, Alexander Bach, who happened to be in the building, escaped by hiding in a cabinet. He then donned the clothes of a charwoman, and was about to sally forth when an officer reminded him of his moustache. There was no time to shave it off, so the female

disguise was discarded and Bach slipped away in the dusk wearing a footman's livery cap.

This, at last, was real revolution. During the night and the next day the rabble raged in the streets. They thirsted for Bach's blood, but the Minister of Justice had reached the troops of General Auersperg encamped just outside the walls, and was now in safety. Several companies of infantry joined the rebels. The black-red-gold flag of republican Germany was hoisted on public buildings. A Committee of Public Welfare proclaimed its dictatorship. Vienna was openly at war with constituted authority.

At dawn, while Latour's mutilated body was still dangling from a lamp-post in front of the War Office, the Court left under strong military escort for the little town of Olmütz in Moravia.

VI

And now counter-revolution struck out with full force. At the head of an army of 60,000 composed mostly of Slav regiments, Prince Windischgraetz, his field marshal's baton fresh from the Emperor's hands, marched on the rebellious capital.

At last his turn had come. He had foreseen everything. On August 28 he wrote to the Emperor's new Adjutant-General, Prince Joseph Lobkowitz:

> "Unfortunately too many mistakes have already been committed which cannot be mended; but the Government is resting on such a feeble foundation that within the shortest time revolution is inevitable. In that case the most important task will be to bring the sacred person of His Majesty the Emperor into security. First of

> all, I make you responsible for His Majesty not granting any further concessions. As soon as you notice that they are trying to extort another concession, or that the Emperor's person is endangered in any way, you must rally as many troops as you can and take His Majesty with the whole Imperial Family, but under the protection of his army, and not as a flight, to Olmütz by way of Krems. Then I shall conquer Vienna, His Majesty will abdicate in favour of his nephew the Archduke Francis Joseph, and then I shall conquer Budapest."

These were proud self-reliant words—the words of a dictator and a king-maker. They might be called words of conceit, but for the almost uncanny accuracy with which their prophecy was fulfilled. Indeed, that accuracy somehow suggests the precision of a juggler's card tricks. Did Windischgraetz play his game with a marked pack? Leaders of a counter-revolution love nothing so much as the excesses of revolution. To the pocket edition of the Duke of Alba the bloody events of October 6 presented a long-awaited opportunity; the lynching of Count Latour meant an encore given by over-zealous performers, a chance to be improved upon. What Windischgraetz really desired was not to maintain law and order but to exterminate his opponents. Who was to blame if the Government "rested on such feeble foundations"? Had Windischgraetz in May despatched a mere fragment of his army of 60,000—four or five regiments—to Vienna the extremists would never have gained control of the capital. He could easily have spared those troops; if he did not send them on it was because he did not want to strengthen the hand of the constitutional ministry. It was his calculated inactivity which prepared the way for the outbreak of October 6. And now those accursed

liberals and democrats who would not hear of the grace of God should verily hear of the grace of guns.

In forced marches Windischgraetz's host closed in on the unhappy city. A somewhat dilatory attempt by the Hungarians at relief was repulsed by Jellačić at Schwechat. After a siege of five days, during which the defenders were seriously hampered by the sabotage and outright treachery of the loyalist upper classes, the heroic resistance of the Vienna revolution was broken. On the evening of October 31 Windischgraetz entered the city. On the morrow once more the black-and-yellow Imperial flag floated from the spire of St. Stephen's. And now the Emperor's lieutenant lived up to his reputation. The Viennese democracy was drowned in blood. Its leaders were court-martialled and shot; the slightest offence against the occupying forces was punished by instant death; hundreds were imprisoned or deported. If Ferdinand the Feeble-minded in the kindness of his puerile heart would have abhorred the rôle of Philip II of Spain which was being thrust upon his unsuspecting self, his brand-new Field Marshal revelled in the sense of being the Alba of the nineteenth century.

VII

The next number in the programme of counter-revolution as outlined by the Prince Windischgraetz was the removal of the Emperor, and the enthronement of his nephew.

That Ferdinand was utterly incompetent was not the decisive factor in the *camarilla's* resolve to eliminate him. Worse it was that he was bound by his solemn pledge to observe the Constitution. Nor would the heir to the throne, the Emperor's brother Archduke Francis

Charles, represent much of an improvement. He was not quite so irresponsible as Ferdinand, but he, too, was deficient in intellect and personality; moreover, he was heavily compromised by his association with liberals, and some of his utterances had committed him too far in the direction of constitutionalism. What the chieftains of the counter-revolution needed was a ruler without ties and obligations—a blank cheque that they themselves could draw for any amount of blood and iron.

The Archduke Francis Charles's eldest son, eighteen-year-old Archduke Franz, filled the requirements. He was serious-minded far beyond his age, and utterly devoted to duty; from his earliest childhood he had been brought up by his mother in constant visualization of the great responsibility which would ultimately devolve upon him. He was handsome, of a fine soldierly bearing, and combined the charm of his youth with a natural dignity that marked him as a born ruler over men.

Ever since her son had been a babe in arms, every act, every thought of the Archduchess Sophie was impressed into the service of a single purpose: that of making him Emperor. Her hour had struck at last; her untiring efforts were to be rewarded. But, in the last moment difficulties appeared. Ferdinand, who early in November had consented to the plan of his abdication, unexpectedly balked when he was confronted with the cold fact. He clung desperately to his shadow Empire—so strong was the will to power bred into his Habsburg bones. But his resistance was overcome by the efforts of the Empress Maria Anna who in this hour of need proved Sophie's most useful ally. She was a simple-minded, kindly woman, this Italian princess, daughter of King Victor Emmanuel I of Sardinia, who had entered a mock marriage with the idiotic Emperor of Austria at the mature age of

twenty-eight because she was told that it was God's will that she should. She was deeply religious, and devoted to such notions of duty as her rather below-the-average intellect was capable of conceiving. Her main function consisted in being present at all important audiences and to intervene if her husband, in the irresponsible goodness of his heart, was about to commit a *bêtise.* It weighed all the more heavily on her as she realized that she was not competent herself to understand the intricate problems that were discussed. She yearned for a quiet carefree life of prayer and religious observances, and no one was happier than she when at last Ferdinand acquiesced in the inevitable.

But the Emperor was comparatively easy to deal with. It was his brother who in the eleventh hour threatened to upset the well-laid scheme. Francis Charles, so meek and tractable always, now suddenly developed a surprising independence. He declared that he could not forego his rights, as his renunciation would strike a blow against the sacred principle of legitimacy. Sophie told him not to worry about that. But, like many weak characters, Francis Charles could be obstinate. He entrenched himself behind the memory of his father. The Emperor Francis, he said, would surely not approve of his son shirking his God-ordained responsibility. At last his conscience was allayed by the very authority he invoked. The dead Emperor appeared to him in a vision and announced that it was *his* will that Francis Charles should resign in his son's favour. That settled the matter. Francis Charles gave in, and Sophie saw to it that the sallow-faced court official whose successful impersonation of the paternal ghost so materially contributed to this happy outcome should receive his well-earned reward.

The Archduke Francis Joseph, Aged 18

The Emperor Francis Joseph at His Accession in 1848

Sophie's work now was complete; what still remained were formalities. In making her son, and not her husband, Emperor—for there was a moment when, Windischgraetz's proud prophecy notwithstanding, the choice rested with her—she exhibited much self-abnegation; for by her husband's renunciation she forfeited her own chance of becoming Empress. She was not to be even Empress-Mother, though, while her son remained unmarried, she would retain precedence at court. But Sophie, all too human in so many other respects, was above mere vanity. She had a keen sense of reality; and she understood that by following the counsel of her mother's instinct she renounced the external trappings of imperial power, but secured its substance. She knew that she would rule through an utterly devoted son much more safely than through a husband who feared rather than loved her and who might even seek and find foils for her influence.

A necessary prelude to the final act of Francis Joseph's accession was the formation of a strong and dependable Cabinet. The right to name a Premier was part of the reward stipulated by the Prince Windischgraetz for his services. He now proposed his brother-in-law, Lieutenant-General Prince Felix Schwarzenberg. Presently appointed, Schwarzenberg lost no time in selecting his associates, and gathered around himself such an array of talent that the British Ambassador described his Cabinet as one composed of Prime Ministers only. Beside Bach, now once more Minister of Justice, most prominent among the new Ministers were Count Stadion, a nephew of the Emperor Francis's gifted Foreign Minister, who, as Governor of Trieste and later of Galicia, had proved himself a most capable administrator and now held the portfolio of Interior, and Baron Bruck, the Min-

ister of Commerce, who had achieved great distinction as a promoter of export trade and shipping.

One technical difficulty still had to be surmounted. The Archduke Francis Joseph was only eighteen years old, and a minor. Under the Austrian law his accession thus would have necessitated a regency; in Hungary, though, there was no statute fixing the sovereign's majority. Here was a legal snag which provided the Minister of Justice with an opportunity to exercise his lawyer's ingenuity. He proposed, and it was decided, that as his last act of government Ferdinand was to declare his nephew and heir as being of age.

VIII

All these preparations were conducted in the strictest secrecy. Not even the brothers of the young Emperor-to-be were initiated. In order to keep up appearances Francis Joseph continued to attend his studies to the last minute, and on the evening of December 1, 1848, he still sat, as seriously and dutifully as ever, through a lesson in canonic law under the Rev. Doctor Columbus.

On the morning of December 2, the otherwise so quiet little town of Olmütz was astir with excitement. At sunrise the rumour spread that all Archdukes, Cabinet ministers, high officials, generals and staff officers were summoned for eight o'clock to the archiepiscopal palace where the Court resided. It also became known that at midnight the Prince Windischgraetz and General Jellačić had arrived. Everybody asked what might be the purpose of such a solemn gathering at such an early hour.

At half past seven all apartments of the residence adjoining the throne room were filled with a festive crowd. All the Archdukes and Archduchesses had ar-

rived with their suites, all canons of the cathedral, a few ladies of the nobility, and a large number of officers and officials in glittering uniforms. All faces were tense with curiosity; the most fantastic conjectures zigzagged through the brilliant throng.

Suddenly, at eight o'clock sharp, the excited buzz of conversation was cut short by the entrance of the Archdukes Maximilian, Charles Louis and Ferdinand of Este, the Archduchesses Maria Dorothea, widow of the Palatine of Hungary, and Elizabeth of Este, further the entire Cabinet headed by the Premier, Prince Schwarzenberg, Field Marshal Prince Windischgraetz, General Jellačić, Governor of Croatia, and Count Grünne, Master of the Household to the Archduke Francis Joseph. They went straight through to the throne room, and as the door closed behind them, the great wing door leading to the inner apartments of the Imperial family were thrown open, and in marched the Emperor and Empress, followed by the Master of the Household, Count Fürstenberg, Adjutant-General Lobkowitz, and the Mistress of the Household, Countess Fürstenberg, the Archduke Francis Charles, the Archduchess Sophie, and, lastly, the youthful Archduke Francis Joseph. Their Majesties took their seats, not on the throne, but on two armchairs in front of it; the Archdukes and Archduchesses were seated in two rows on both sides, while the Ministers, the court dignitaries and the two generals remained standing opposite the Emperor.

A solemn silence fell. Ferdinand rose, and with a trembling voice read a brief declaration to the effect that important reasons induced him to resign the Imperial Crown in favour of his nephew the Archduke Francis Joseph, as his beloved brother, the Archduke Francis Charles, had renounced his right to the succession.

Ferdinand sat down. The Premier, Prince Schwarzenberg, smart, tall, lean in his white general's uniform, his pale clear-cut face white like marble, stepped forward, and read aloud Francis Charles's statement of renunciation and Ferdinand's rescript declaring that the Archduke Francis Joseph had attained his majority on his eighteenth birthday, the preceding August 18th.

Francis Joseph, handsome, blond and slim, approached his uncle and kneeled down at his feet. Ferdinand spread his hands above the boy's head and muttered in a voice stifled with tears: "God bless you, be good, God will protect you. I was glad to do it." He lifted him up and held him pressed against his heart in a long mute embrace. Everybody in the room wept; the Archduchesses sobbed loudly; alone the Empress Maria Anna's face beamed with pious happiness.

Francis Joseph stepped down from the throne, his cheeks flushed, but otherwise calm and collected. A few minutes ago he was still the Archduke Franzi; now he was the Emperor Francis Joseph, successor of Roman Cæsars and of Charlemagne. He embraced his parents and, accompanied by Count Grünne, walked out of the room.

It was over. Ferdinand and his Empress also left. A *procès-verbal,* drawn up by Baron Hübner, Schwarzenberg's secretary, was read aloud and signed by all those present. Then the doors were thrown wide open and the crowd of courtiers and officers which had awaited developments in breathless suspense thronged in. The Prince Schwarzenberg briefly announced what had just passed.

A little later the Emperor Francis Joseph, attended by Field Marshal Prince Windischgraetz, reviewed the troops of the garrison. They acclaimed him wildly. The Field Marshal's son, a young subaltern, was among the cheering cohorts.

> "It was a wonderful sight as this boy of eighteen rode along the lines amid frantic ovations," he wrote later. "There is in his bearing an assurance and decision which appeals to everybody. It is a grand thing to be able to be enthusiastic about one's Emperor."

The boy of eighteen, almost girlishly slender in his white swallowtail coat, returned to the palace. Somebody humbly approached him: "Your Majesty . . ."

The boy of eighteen blushed. "Farewell, my youth!" he said simply.

PART THE SECOND

THE TREE

CHAPTER VII

VICTORY

I

Some of the officers in Windischgraetz's army which on October 31, 1848, entered Vienna had three letters engraved on their sabre blades: WJR. They were the initials of the counter-revolutionary trinity, Windischgraetz, Jellačić, Radetzky. To them the Prince Schwarzenberg referred when he said, at Olmütz, that the Empire had been saved by three mutineers. Radetzky refused to evacuate Lombardy contrary to orders from the Court at Innsbruck; Windischgraetz ignored the demand of the War Office to send half his forces to Vienna in May; as to Jellačić, was he not branded rebel and traitor by Imperial manifesto?

Windischgraetz and Jellačić were present in body at the ceremony in the throne room at Olmütz; Radetzky, busy in the Italian theatre of war, attended in spirit only. Yet his presence was no less a reality. Indeed, these three were by far the most important personages in that glittering audience; for they represented the power which lifted Francis Joseph on the throne: counter-revolution. Those initials WJR were engraved over the face of Francis Joseph's reign of sixty-eight years. He was made Emperor to put down, and keep down, the people. Could he help thinking, on that day of his exaltation, that the people were wicked? It had been the dominant thought

of the life and reign of his beloved grandfather Francis. It was the thought impressed upon him by his mother, Sophie.

The panic of 1789 had given colour to the life and reign of Francis I. The panic of 1848 gave colour to the life and reign of Francis Joseph I. Among the whirl of ideas and emotions which on that memorable Second of December stormed through the head of the youth of eighteen one must have cruised round and round the beloved figure of his childhood who did not live to see that day. "I am in the same position as He. He conquered *his* revolution; I shall conquer mine. May it please God that I shall be worthy of Him."

He was, so the Saxon diplomat Vitzthum wrote, lifted by the army upon their shields. It was an ominous phrase; for during the rest of his life Francis Joseph was to regard the shields of his army as the only safe perch. He was emphatically the soldiers' Emperor, and he loved it; it was the fulfilment of his dedication. He felt he was a soldier himself, first and last. A few months before his accession he had been through his baptism of fire: at Santa Lucia, on the Italian front. He was sent there against the wishes, and to the embarrassment of, the Field Marshal Radetzky who hated being saddled with responsibility for life and limb of another Imperial prince; and he remained under fire against repeated orders of his superiors. A few months after he had become Emperor he was present at the battle of Raab, in Hungary, and rode into the town across a burning bridge. The Czar Nicholas sent him the Cross of St. George for this exploit, together with a letter begging him to restrain his exuberant courage and consider the safety of his precious person. The Prince Schwarzenberg once said of him that he was a "fearless

chap"—a high compliment from a man who knew no fear himself.

Wherever the tall, slender youth with the handsome, narrow face and the steel-blue eyes went he impressed everybody with a presence that was far beyond his years. He had, as Leopold, King of the Belgians, wrote to his niece Queen Victoria, "a certain something that confers authority and that very often those who possess authority have not got and cannot display." Leopold, too, was struck with his courage. "We were repeatedly surrounded by people of all classes, and he was surely at their mercy, yet I never saw his courageous expression change, neither through pleasure nor through fear."

Some at least of this courage, perhaps a little too insistently exhibited, may have had an origin analogous to that of the Emperor's celebrated horsemanship. It will be recalled that the boy Francis Joseph disliked horses and was afraid of them. Courage sometimes marks the conduct of the inner coward. At any rate, in later life Francis Joseph heeded Nicholas's fatherly advice and did not expose himself to danger in battle. He never ceased, however, to enjoy manœuvres and parades. They were dress rehearsals of his omnipotence. The Emperor of nineteen ordered about his grey-haired generals just as a schoolboy in fairyland would order about his teachers. Vitzthum describes a scene at a review in the autumn of 1849. The Emperor, dissatisfied with an evolution, called out angrily to General Welden: "I command to be obeyed." The old General galloped away. Presently he returned and reported in a reverent tone: "Your Majesty's orders have been carried out." "There was," adds Vitzthum, "in the five words of the young Emperor, and in the expression of his face, something unspeakably imposing."

He had been brought up to be a ruler of men, and the homage and obedience of others was to him like the air which he breathed. Yet his extraordinary dignity, noted by all who came into contact with him, was, like his courage, at least partly cultivated with deliberation. It was the effort of a boy, overconscious of his eighteen years, with the eyes of all the world on him. He forced his dignity as other boys of his age would try to force a reluctant moustache; and with the years his dignity, like a moustache, grew naturally. He had to insist on keeping people at a distance because he could not bear being measured. And yet this determination to live up to his part, this resolute *grandezza* which betrayed a sense of smallness, had a streak of the real thing in it. Who shall draw the line separating authentically life from the pose faithfully borne to life's end? If Francis Joseph played a part he played it so well that in the long run he and the part became a whole.

II

During the first eighteen years of his life the eldest son of the Archduke Francis Charles, heir-presumptive to the Imperial crown, was known as the Archduke Franz, or, in the family circle, Franzi for short. That he now ascended the throne as Francis Joseph I had a reason.

He had been baptized Franz after his grandfather. The name stood for the memories of that monarch's long reign—patriarchal tyranny, police meddling, the System, Metternich. It would have been, for the people at least, a challenge and a bad omen. So his second Christian name, Joseph, was summoned from the long queue of patron saints adorning his baptismal register—for that reminded of the great Emperor of Enlightenment,

now remembered as the truest friend and benefactor of the people.

Still, for the conservatives there was comfort in the thought that this Joseph was Francis in the first place. Francis was the badge of counter-revolution, symbol of the return to the good old times, Metternich style. Reactionaries could well afford to chuckle; they regarded Joseph, harbinger of reform and progress, as a mere stunt for the benefit of the populace.

To be sure, it was proposed as such. Yet a subtler truth lurked behind the artful combination than its sponsor ever suspected. For the two Christian names represented the two opposed tendencies in Francis Joseph's soul, the spirit of standpat despotism and clerical reaction, the school of Metternich, Bombelles and Rauscher on the one hand, the current of enlightened progress, of timely adjustment, the ideas of Hauslab, Pilgram and Lichtenfels on the other. Joseph may have been intended as a sham; but unintended, it became a looming reality—not so strong, indeed, as his rival Franz, but strong enough to muddle the latter's single-mindedness. Two in this case was less than one; by the strange arithmetic of psychology one plus one became one-half: that "half" which was ever the Habsburg incubus.

The man who proposed the name-juggling trick at the last moment—for the manifesto proclaiming Francis II Emperor had been set up in type—was the Premier, Prince Felix Schwarzenberg. He owed his position to the influence of his brother-in-law, the king-maker and dictator, Prince Windischgraetz. The grim General, of course, wanted, if not a dummy—he knew his relation too well for that—at least a congenial and tractable associate. He was, poor soul, bound for the disappointment of his life.

Lieutenant-General the Prince Felix Schwarzenberg was a scion of the first family of the Austrian Empire—a clan of once sovereign German princes owning huge estates in Southern Bohemia and the Alpine lands, and entitled to intermarry with the Habsburgs on an equal footing. The Prince Felix looked back on a gay and stormy past. At eighteen he joined a cavalry regiment. Six years later he entered the diplomatic service, at the same time retaining his commission in the army. He occupied posts from one end of Europe to the other, being carried hither and thither by a wave of red-hot scandal. He had to be recalled from St. Petersburg because he was involved in the Decabrist conspiracy; from Lisbon, because his carriage was stoned by a mob provoked by his arrogance; and he made himself impossible in England by abducting the wife of Lord Ellenborough. This last adventure necessitated a prolonged holiday. Later he resumed his career, and served as Minister first to Turin, then to Naples. Meanwhile he had reached the rank of lieutenant-general. At the outbreak of the revolution in 1848 he joined Radetzky's army in Italy, commanded a division, distinguished himself by his bravery, and was wounded in action. The fatal Sixth of October found him in Vienna. He reported for duty to the general in command, Count Auersperg, and rendered valuable services. When the capital was given up he joined the Court at Olmütz.

He was tall and slim, with the smart bearing of the typical Austrian cavalry officer; his face was handsome, very pale, with an almost Greek profile "chiselled in grey marble," in the words of an admirer; his forehead was high but perhaps too narrow, and his head rather too small for his height, suggesting a thoroughbred nervous animal. His deep-set steel-grey eyes flashed initiative

and resolution. His chin was clean-shaven, in the courtly manner of the *ancien régime;* but he wore his hair cropped close in the new German military fashion. His whole appearance suggested strength, but strength somewhat used-up—a volcano of passion still glowing underneath a shell of ice. Altogether, he looked like an exceptionally well-preserved man of sixty. He was forty-eight.

His outstanding quality was courage, both physical and moral. Courage was to be his contribution to Austrian polity, decayed into old-maidish primness and mandarinesque deliberation under the deadly weight of Metternichian "system." Schwarzenberg was a past master of bluff, of shrewd terrorization. His jaded appetites craved thrills, and he found them in gambling with the fates of Empires. He loved to scare his enemy by suddenly flashing his pistol in his face, as it were, and to tell him afterward that it was not loaded.

Part of his courage was that of ignorance. His education never progressed beyond the stage of the cavalry subaltern. Apart from some Latin classics and a few books on anatomy which formed his avocation he never bothered to read. His lack of political orientation excited the wonderment of foreign diplomats; in the absence of knowledge he allowed his instinct to guide him, and was, at least on a short-range view, seldom deceived. Of internal politics he knew less than nothing; he was unacquainted even with the names of the parties. This latter ignorance, though, was to an extent deliberate, expression of the contempt that he, the great lord, ardent champion of autocracy, felt for the popular currents. Parties did not matter; they were all rabble. His political philosophy was of a grandiose simplicity. The people existed to obey; the monarch and his counsellors

were to rule as they pleased. Firmness was the most important attribute of government; hitting hard, the ultimate wisdom. The thing to do with the opposition was to line it up against a wall and shoot it. If one could not do that at once, one was to gain time by cheating. Schwarzenberg's practice was purely Machiavellian, though it is doubtful if he ever heard the name of the sophisticated Florentine.

Next to his iron will and his flashes of intuition his greatest asset was his gift, allied to the latter, for selecting his associates, and his willingness to be guided by expert advice in matters which he did not understand. In employing talent he showed himself singularly free from prejudice. He, the feudal prince, not only appointed Bach, the notorious ex-revolutionary, to his cabinet, but also made him his closest friend, his only intimate. Here was one more point of disagreement between him and his brother-in-law; for Windischgraetz was so imbued with class prejudice that he preferred Count Stadion, the radical aristocrat, to the reactionary of bourgeois origin.

For the matter of that, the pocket edition of the Duke of Alba was several degrees less hard than Schwarzenberg. The Field Marshal was harsh, but he was not inhuman; he had a streak of soldierly chivalry in him, which made him shrink from excessive cruelty. It is recorded that he spent sleepless nights before signing a death warrant. Schwarzenberg regarded this as silly sentimentalism; he was bent on annihilating all that stood in his way. He knew no mercy. Among the captured leaders of the Vienna revolution were two members of the Frankfort parliament, Blum and Froebel. Before the court-martial they claimed extraterritorial rights. Windischgraetz was worried, and wrote to his brother-in-law

The Emperor Francis Joseph Receives His First Ministry

The Emperor to the left; in the centre Prince Felix Schwarzenberg, the Premier. The ceremony took place on the day of Francis Joseph's Accession to the throne, December 2, 1848

The Battle of Santa Lucia

Fought on May 6th, 1848. Lieutenant-General d'Aspre (in centre) begs the Archduke Francis Joseph (in left foreground) to withdraw from the heavy fire to safety.

that he thought the best thing was to have Blum and Froebel deported, as court-martialling them would involve the Government in complications with the German Federal Authority. Schwarzenberg replied that he was going to take care of the complications; the privileges of the Frankfort Parliament had no validity in Austria; the only privileges, he added scornfully, that Blum and Froebel could claim were those of the drumhead court-martial. Thereupon the deputies were sentenced to death. The Frankfort Parliament lodged a protest, invoking parliamentary immunity to stay the execution. Nevertheless Blum was shot, and afterwards Bach addressed a polite note to Frankfort saying that the Austrian Government had received the protest, alas! too late. Schwarzenberg was delighted with this lawyer's trick, but Windischgraetz was so disgusted that he pardoned Froebel on his own responsibility.

III

Two weeks after the Court's flight to Olmütz the Constituent Assembly was transferred by Imperial rescript from Vienna to the little Moravian town of Kremsier, at a few miles' distance from the temporary capital. People, searching the map for the city whose name they had never heard before, wondered about the motive of the removal. The idea was, of course, to withdraw the legislature from the vicious atmosphere of revolutionary Vienna, and at the same time to emphasize that the rebel city was outlawed.

On November 27, five days prior to the change of sovereign, Schwarzenberg announced to the Reichstag the programme of his Ministry. He declared "sincerely and without reservations" for the constitutional monarchy in which the legislative power was

vested in the monarch and the elected representatives of the people. He promised equal rights and unhindered development to all nationalities of the Empire, equality before the law to all subjects, and extensive municipal autonomy. The Government, the Premier proclaimed, would henceforth not lag behind the movement for liberal reform, but would take its lead.

Specific references were made to the problems of Italy and Hungary. The former would, it was stated, "obtain full guaranty of her nationhood in organic union with constitutional Austria." As to Hungary, the non-Magyar races engaged in bitter struggle with the Magyar rebels were fighting to preserve the unity of the Empire, and were therefore entitled to support to the utmost. In combating, against its will, the Hungarians the Government was making war, not on freedom, but on those who wished to rob the peoples of their freedom.

Concerning the most difficult problem of Austrian polity—the question whether the Empire should be organized along federal or centralistic lines—the Premier made an announcement that brought cheer to the hearts of all. He promised a "free organization of all parts of the Empire in all their internal affairs," but under the control of a strong central government. The first half of the pledge satisfied the Federalists. The Czechs already saw the kingdom of Venceslaus arise from its ashes. The second half reassured the Centralists. Everybody was happy. There was an extremely mean person by the name of Adolf Franckel, a Moravian publicist, who tried to point out that the two promises were contradictory, that if one was kept the other could not be, and that in all probability the Government intended to break both. His poem "A Programme," in which he pretended to interpret the Premier's address,

showed to what depths human intellect may be debased through contact with revolutionary ideas.

> "All provinces will obtain autonomy," he wrote, "but the army will keep its centralistic bayonets. . . . The Government has been accused of partiality to certain nationalities. Henceforth all races will enjoy equal disfranchisement. We pledge our honour to carry out this programme, and if we find it inconvenient to do so, we pledge our honour to break it."

The manifestoes announcing Ferdinand's abdication and Francis Joseph's accession respectively were prepared by Schwarzenberg, too. In a tentative draft of the former it was stated that Ferdinand's retirement was due to his "indignation over the violation of monarchical prerogatives." Schwarzenberg changed this into "considerations of health." This, while literally not untrue, was morally a lie; for Schwarzenberg altered the original wording because he thought that the time for plain speaking had not yet come.

For the first proclamation of the new Emperor Prince Windischgraetz had proposed a tone of patriarchal despotism in the "let us return to the good old times" vein. Schwarzenberg smiled at the soldierly bluntness of the excellent Field Marshal. "Why, we are all constitutionalists now," he said. The proclamation was constitutionalist too.

> "Recognizing," it said unctuously, "by inner conviction the need for and high value of institutions in harmony with the spirit of the times, we enter with confidence upon the road which will lead us to a salutary reorganization and rejuvenation of the Monarchy. On the foundation of true

> freedom, of equal franchise for all peoples, and equality before the law for all citizens, as well as of the participation of the people's representatives in the task of legislation, the Fatherland will rise again, in its old grandeur, but with renewed strength."

These were golden words. The elected representatives of the people could expect no more. They worked away furiously, in their Kremsier retreat, at the task of reorganizing and rejuvenating the Monarchy on the foundation of true freedom. More than that: they seemed to have undertaken the reorganization and rejuvenation of the universe. Removal to the little market town of the Moravian backwoods cut the slender thread which had, at Vienna, tied the assembly of idealists and ideologues to a reality however chaotic. At Kremsier it was possible to legislate in a vacuum, untrammelled by the tradition of the past and responsibilities of the future. They reorganized and rejuvenated the universe, never stopping to consider whether the universe took notice of their effort. They spent the first three months in formulating the guiding principles of the basic law. They codified the doctrine of popular sovereignty in its most radical form. They abolished the veto power of the crown. They abolished the nobility. They abolished the death penalty. They disestablished the Roman Catholic Church. They legalized civil marriage. In a word, they swept Austrian history off the boards and called an ideal commonwealth into existence. How, when and by whom these reforms were to be enforced—these questions were, for the time being, left open. Then—it was January 22, 1849—they settled down to their proper business: the task of reconstructing the Empire in accordance with the needs of its peoples.

Ever since the early sixteenth century, when Ferdinand, brother of Charles V of Spain, laid the foundations of what was to be the Austro-Hungarian Empire by acquiring, in addition to his Austrian holdings proper, the royal crowns of Bohemia and Hungary, two rival tendencies manifested themselves in the polity of this chequered agglomeration of provinces and races. One was the natural striving of the Emperors to gather as much of the threads of government in their own hands as possible; the other, the just as natural endeavour of the provinces to retain a maximum of their ancient privileges, their historic home rule. With the awakening of peoples toward the end of the eighteenth century these two main currents derived additional strength and new colour from the fact that the Imperial, centralistic interest became identified with the ascendency of a strong bureaucracy and a rising bourgeoisie of German nationality, while the advocacy of provincial self-government converted itself into a championship of the rights of national minorities, most important among which were the Czechs. As the feudal nobility of the different provinces saw its privileges menaced by the absolutistic, equalitarian and levelling tendencies of the centralist bureaucracy, it allied itself, in most instances, with the nationalist and autonomist groups. Thus came about the anomaly that in the course of the nineteenth century the great noble houses of Bohemia, preponderantly German by origin, deliberately Czechified themselves and became the chief supporters of provincial home rule topped over by a federal organization for the Empire.

The Reichstag of 1848 was dominated by this contrast of German centralism and anti-German federalism. But while the Czech Federalists knew what they wanted, and went about getting it in the manner of practical politics,

fighting for every inch of ground, bargaining for every ounce of concession, the Germans, split into half a dozen factions, made speeches about eternal principles and the rights of man, and wasted precious time. Still, out of the chaos of speechmaking and haggling, a solution gradually emerged—a federal system with the old historic provinces as units, within which the rights of national minorities were safeguarded by the creation of autonomous districts along racial lines. This extension of the principle of home rule to subdivisions of provinces was an entirely new thing, designed principally to insure the free development of the considerable German minority in Bohemia which saw itself endangered by a Czech provincial government. Another group which benefited by the provision were the Italians of South Tyrol.

The federal power was vested in a ministry responsible to a legislature of two chambers, one being elected by direct popular vote, and the other by the provincial assemblies. Devised by amateurs and ideologues, this Kremsier constitution was probably the best governmental scheme ever suggested for Austria. It combined happily a maximum of home rule for historical and racial units with a strong federal authority. For the first—and last—time the peoples of Austria were allowed to take their fate into their own hands; and with all their inexperience, their dogmatism and their dissensions, the legislators of Kremsier chanced, by the *élan* of their instinct and their sincerity, upon a plan that suited best their peculiar and tangled requirements.

On March 2 the drafting committee submitted its product to the House. The assembly hall was decorated with the new white-red-gold tricolour, symbol of the good will and brotherhood of all the peoples of the Empire. In a solemn session, conscious of inaugurating a new

epoch in Austrian history, the draft was referred back to the committee for minor amendments, and a first reading was set for March 15, anniversary of the triumphant revolution.

The deputies were happy like children. They did not know that playtime was up. Schwarzenberg decided that the game had gone far enough. Late in the evening of March 6 the Minister of Interior, Count Stadion, arrived at Kremsier, summoned the leaders of the government party, and informed them that on the following day the Reichstag was to be dissolved by order in council. Stadion was the only sincere liberal in the Cabinet, and he detested his job which he had undertaken only so as to be able to mitigate the severity of its execution. The consternation of the leaders—all staunch loyalists—upset him so that he at once returned to Olmütz, hoping to convince Schwarzenberg that the *coup d'état* was both a crime and a mistake.

Arriving about midnight at the temporary capital Stadion went straight to the apartments of Bach, assuming that the ex-hero of barricades was his most likely ally. The Minister of Justice was fast asleep. Stadion shook him by the shoulder and stated his errand.

"What do you mean by waking me up like that?" grumbled Bach. "Go to the devil!"

Stadion, despairing, hurried back to Kremsier. In the morning the Reichstag building was occupied by grenadiers, and the astounded deputies were ordered home. Schwarzenberg had decreed the arrest of the opposition leaders, but this was too much for Stadion. The Minister of Interior warned the proscribed ones, and they fled.

The manifesto issued by Schwarzenberg in justification of the proceedings topped off hypocrisy with arrogance.

The Reichstag was presented with a long list of its sins. It had been disbanded, the document said, because instead of accomplishing constructive work it indulged in propounding dangerous theories which might shake the foundations of the state. As a matter of fact, the coup had been planned months ahead, and nothing that the Assembly might or might not do would have made a particle of difference.

Yet the manifesto told the truth. There was one sentence in it that punctured the pretences of the rest.

"We trust," it read, "in the gallantry and honour of our glorious army."

On February 27 the Imperial troops, under Windischgraetz and Schlick, had severely defeated the Hungarian rebels in the battle of Kápolna. That victory—thought at the moment to be decisive—released Schwarzenberg's long-maturing plan to chase the Constituent Assembly to the winds.

IV

Simultaneously with the writ of dissolution appeared an Imperial rescript imposing a new Constitution upon the Empire. It bore the date of March 4, 1849.

It was a remarkable product, this March Constitution, as it came to be labelled by history. In the first place, it represented the fulfilment, but also the breach, of an Imperial pledge. In his first manifesto the young sovereign had vowed that he would rule constitutionally. Surely sending home the elected representatives of the people by a battalion of grenadiers was not the act of a constitutional monarch. Yet in the same breath the people were asked to accept the new basic law as an earnest of his promise.

In the second place, one of the co-authors of the new

charter was a sworn enemy of all constitutions. In the main the Constitution embodied the ideas of the Minister of Interior, Count Stadion, a staunch Josephine liberal. It was centralistic, German, and equalitarian. But the whole-hearted elaboration of those ideas was thwarted by the interference of Field-Marshal Prince Windischgraetz. It was part of the latter's contracted reward for downing the revolution that he should have a voice in working out the new form of government—and pledges given to successful generals are, unlike those given to unsuccessful parliaments, not usually broken.

Windischgraetz detested everything that Stadion prized high. Above all, he detested the idea of committing the young Emperor to a new set of promises. What was the use of removing Ferdinand if his successor was to involve himself in the same beastly nuisance? But the excellent Field-Marshal was given to understand by his brother-in-law the Premier that a constitution was, under the circumstances, a necessary evil. The stress lay on "under the circumstances." So, not without grumbling, the dictator waived his objection to the principle, and braced himself to prune, at least, its excrescences.

Next, the Field-Marshal hated centralization, for he had been told by the Prince Metternich that centralization was a vicious French article, a product of the Revolution. He further hated everything that smacked of liberalism. He hated the bourgeoisie, parliamentary institutions, and equality before the law. His ideal was an autocracy tempered by the privileges of the feudal estates, ruling by means of the mailed fist; and he regarded himself as the mailed fist. He was a federalist, because he had been told by the Prince Metternich that the nobility, ensconced in their provincial strongholds, formed the

strongest bulwark against innovation whether by mobs or by bureaucrats.

Schwarzenberg, who refereed the fight between the Minister and the Field Marshal, had no more love for constitutions, liberal principles, and the middle class, than his haughty relation. But he was an opportunist, and he also had a hearty contempt for the Austrian aristocracy.

> "It would be easy enough," he said, "to give the Constitution an aristocratic complexion. But to impart to our aristocracy vitality and power of resistance is utterly impossible, for that would require honest, intelligent and courageous aristocrats, and these simply do not exist. I do not in the entire Empire know twelve men of our class who under the present circumstances could make themselves useful in an Upper House."

Intimacy with the mental processes of his brother-in-law may have influenced the Premier's judgment. In any event, he decided in favour of Stadion's liberal centralism as against Windischgraetz's conservative federalism. To be sure, to him centralism was the important thing, and liberalism a temporary annoyance. As a stunt, however, to gain time Stadion's constitution was not bad. For Schwarzenberg considered the dispersal of the Kremsier assembly as a mere preliminary. The Hungarian rebellion was not yet suppressed; the Italian question still awaited settlement. Once those difficulties were disposed of "by the gallantry and honour of our glorious army," the whole constitution business could be swept aside "like as much dirt." To Schwarzenberg a pledge meant an expedient, not an obligation. He could wait—he was not a white-coated, gold-laced bull in a china shop like that fool brother-in-law of his. "Sufficient unto the

day is the evil thereof," he used to repeat as the motto of his statesmanship, secretly amused that he, of all men, should choose a Biblical device. Was he aware that he merely periphrased the Metternichian "Time gained, everything gained"? Probably not; for he did not, as a rule, worry over abstractions.

That the new constitution was proclaimed in an incomplete draft was in keeping with Austrian tradition. It bore the stamp of something done in a hurry. Baron Wessenberg called it an improvization, a mere makeshift to help the Government out of an embarrassment.

As a makeshift, however, the new charter did its duty well. It smothered the tendencies of decentralization, to the federalism of a democratic, anti-feudal pattern which had prevailed at Kremsier. It also—and herein lay its innermost meaning—abolished, by a single stroke, the independence of Hungary, a legal fiction when things went well, for the past year an extremely worrying reality. It was a "Constitution for the Austrian Empire," establishing a central executive and legislative at Vienna. In this respect the new basic law was revolutionary.

On the other hand, no reference was made to Lombardy and Venetia. That question was shelved pending a decision of arms.

In giving his assent to some of the liberal provisions—such as those endowing the central parliament with powers of legislation and appropriation, introducing trial by jury, and granting civil liberties, Schwarzenberg was moved, not so much by Stadion's arguments, as by another opportunistic consideration. At this time Austria was engaged in a bitter struggle with Prussia over the leadership of the Germanic Confederation. In order to win popular support in the German states it was essential that Austria should not appear lagging behind her rival in the

matter of political reform. The Premier, utterly contemptuous of public opinion, was prepared to throw a sop to it.

Simultaneously with the proclamation of the new Constitution a whole set of administrative improvements was inaugurated by the various departments. Most important of these was the land reform—regulation of the relation between the liberated serfs and their former overlords through a complicated system of land expropriation and compensation. Thus the great work begun by Joseph II was brought to conclusion. For the successful settlement of this most burning of social problems Bach was primarily responsible. Instinctive solidarity with his clan may have actuated the descendant of serfs; but his conscious purpose was to turn the peasantry, core of the Austrian population, into loyal supporters of the Crown. This end he fully achieved; but Prince Windischgraetz remained unconvinced. "The most rabid communist," wrote the noble Field-Marshal to the Emperor, "has not yet dared to demand that which your Majesty's own Government has accomplished."

The reform wave of the ministries was a good omen. Bad ones were not lacking. According to the Constitution, the Upper House of the imperial parliament was to consist of representatives elected by the provincial assemblies. But these provincial assemblies still had to be created. The date for elections was set for the autumn of 1850—a year and a half ahead. Was the Metternichian "Time gained, everything gained" at work here once more?

Then there was the sad fate of Count Stadion. The author of the Constitution, the only liberal in the Cabinet, had for some time been the victim of exhausted nerves. His vitality was slowly ebbing away; and the Kremsier

coup d'état, of which he had to be the unwilling instrument, dealt him a last blow. He suffered another collapse, and a few weeks later his mind darkened forever.

V

By abolishing the independence of Hungary the Schwarzenberg Government attempted to cook game that had to be bagged first. In that incalculable country (the new basic law called it a province) the achievements of the March revolution had not petered out, as in Austria, in revels of oratory and incompetence. In possession of their new freedom, as enacted by the statute of April 11, 1848, the Magyars proceeded to defend it, arm in hand, against the counter-revolution with a gallantry and devotion that won for them the sympathy and respect of the world.

The Court, true to the Habsburg tradition of doing everything half-way, first allowed the Magyars to organize an army, and then bullied them into making use of it. The rebellion of the South Slavs and Roumanians, provoked by the Magyar refusal to share the gains of the revolution, was, first clandestinely, then openly supported by the Imperial Government. But the Magyars proved equal to the emergency. They drowned the Serb outbreak in blood, and chased Jellačić's Croat regiments across the frontier.

The conquest of the Vienna revolution turned the fortunes of war against the Hungarians. Flushed with his easy victory, the Field-Marshal Windischgraetz invaded the rebel kingdom. The untrained levies, supported by a few Magyar regiments late of the Imperial army, melted away before the overwhelming numbers and superior training of the Austrians. The rebels retreated

east and north, and early in January Windischgraetz occupied Budapest. The last of his prophecies was thus fulfilled.

For the young Emperor the moment afforded a wonderful chance. This, indeed, was the time to exercise that magnanimity which history has always proved the best counsel of statesmanship. The Magyar Government was in flight; the rebellion was on the brink of collapse. A group of moderate leaders, opposed from the outset to the extreme policies of Kossuth, called on Prince Windischgraetz in the conquered capital. The committee was headed by Count Louis Batthyány, the Premier. But the Duke of Alba's belated reincarnation lived up to his character. "I do not negotiate with rebels" was his brusque message to the parlamentaires.

For the Magyars nothing was left but fight to a finish. And now the Prince Windischgraetz, who would not negotiate, showed that he could not fight. He had established his fame as a great general by subduing a few hundred armed students at Prague, and a few thousand untrained national guards at Vienna; but this was a different business. Adversity steeled the Magyar will to resistance. The rebel forces were rallying on all sides. Windischgraetz, instead of following up his initial success and crushing the dazed enemy with a single blow, issued proclamations and played Fabian tactics. The Magyar commander, Görgei, like Grant graduate of a military school turned chemist in civilian life, exploited brilliantly Windischgraetz's mistakes and won a series of victories against odds.

The extremist party now had full control at Debrecen, the temporary capital. On April 14 the Magyar parliament passed a resolution solemnly declaring the House of Habsburg forfeit of the crown of Hungary and pro-

claiming the republic. Kossuth was elected head of the provisional government with the title of Governor.

On the same day the Prince Windischgraetz was removed from command by order of the Emperor.

The Debrecen resolution was the hardest blow that had befallen the dynasty for centuries. The largest and, next to Lombardy, richest of its provinces, the main reservoir of its man power, severed itself from the Empire. Only total annihilation of the rebel forces could now recover Hungary. But for this end more troops were needed; and troops the Imperial Government had none to spare. The bulk of the Imperial Army was engaged elsewhere. One hundred and fifty thousand men were required in Italy to earn for Austria the undying hatred of that ancient nation. Fifty thousand more were needed in Austria proper—in Vienna, Graz, Prague and other cities—to keep down a population which, the Government boasted, had enthusiastically accepted the new dispensation. The Austrian army in Hungary numbered eighty thousand; but this was a beaten army, in full retreat along all lines.

The alternatives were to acquiesce in the loss of Hungary and evacuate that country; or to give up Lombardy and Venetia and send Radetzky's army against the Hungarians; or to appeal to foreign aid. Of the three, the first two were unthinkable. There remained but the third. The Holy Alliance, that time-hallowed instrument to defend autocracy, was still in existence. The King of Prussia and the Emperor of Russia were still bound in honour—and by very real self-interest—to come to the assistance of their brother the Emperor of Austria against his rebellious subjects. The success of the Hungarians would have struck a death blow to legitimacy; it might have precipitated all Europe into the whirlpool of revolt.

Francis Joseph and his Premier first knocked at the door of the Prussian King. True, the Hohenzollerns were upstarts and Prussia an ancient rival, just at this time insolently challenging Austrian ascendency in the German Bund. Still, Prussia was a German state and its King a German Prince; and on repeated occasions Francis Joseph had emphasized that he regarded himself first and foremost a German Prince too. Besides, the best personal relations obtained between him and the aged King Frederick William IV whose Queen was a sister of the Archduchess Sophie, the Emperor's mother.

The Prussian Government was willing to help, but demanded by way of compensation that Austria should consent to the dissolution of the Bund and to the organization of a North German alliance under Prussian hegemony. This, of course, was out of the question. Remained, as last resort, the appeal to the Czar.

The Emperor Nicholas of Russia regarded himself as the protector-in-chief of the monarchical principle in all Christendom. It was with him, brother of the high-strung Alexander, founder of the Holy Alliance, a mystic sense of mission, romantic core of an otherwise harsh and matter-of-fact nature. In the year 1833 he had met the aged Emperor Franz at Münchengrätz. The covenant was renewed, and Nicholas promised the Austrian ruler that he would protect with all his might the latter's son and successor. When Francis Joseph ascended the throne the Czar assured him in exuberant terms of his friendship and affection, and reaffirmed the pledge given to the grandfather.

Although he favoured the alliance with Russia, Schwarzenberg was reluctant to avail himself of Russian aid, afraid lest the Czar should take advantage of Austria's plight and exact too big a price. He also was worried

about prestige, and felt that conquering Hungary with foreign assistance implied moral defeat for Austria. There was, however, nothing else to do, and Nicholas was approached.

The Czar's response was quick and generous. From the beginning of the war, he wrote to Francis Joseph, he had felt that Austria was fighting for the sacred heritage of legitimacy. Austria's cause was his own. Without even referring to the question of compensation or reward, he sent an army of 200,000 to subdue Hungary. From the north and east the Russians poured into the unhappy country. Against such odds all the Magyar heroism availed nothing. Within six weeks it was all over. Kossuth's government fled across the Turkish border, and Görgei, realizing the futility of further slaughter, recommended surrender. On August 13, 1849, the main Hungarian army laid down arms at Világos. It was by way of a deliberate insult to Austrian pride that Görgei capitulated, not to the Austrian commander Haynau, but to the Russian generalissimo Prince Paskievitch. "Hungary lies prostrate at your Majesty's feet," the latter telegraphed to the Czar.

Nicholas recommended magnanimity toward the crushed foe. "Let us thank God," he wrote to Francis Joseph, "for the cessation of bloodshed, and for the opportunity to exercise the most beautiful of our sovereign rights, namely, a well-considered clemency." And, a fortnight later: "Just severity toward the leaders, and forgiveness to the misguided mass seem to me the only practical means of securing lasting peace."

The Russian heir to the throne, Alexander, whom his father had sent down to Hungary, and Prince Paskievitch also exerted themselves to alleviate the fate of the prisoners. It was in vain. Francis Joseph replied to the Czar

that he would be glad to exercise mercy if he were in the position to obey his personal feelings. But the welfare of the State, he wrote, prescribed utmost severity as supreme duty.

The Austrian commander-in-chief, General Haynau, was an excellent soldier, but he had besmirched his name by the atrocities he committed in suppressing the revolt in Italy. At Brescia he hanged right and left, and ordered women to be flogged for the slightest offences. His own chief Radetzky likened him to a razor which one must put back into its case as soon as one has finished using it. This time the razor was not put back. The fate of the Hungarian prisoners was left in his hands. He announced that he owed it "to the world and to the Austrian army" to constitute a terrible example.

Russian intervention saved the life of Görgei, to whom Paskievitch personally had pledged safety. He was interned at Klagenfurt. But thirteen other Hungarian generals were executed at Arad on October 6, 1849—four were shot and nine hanged. They met their death like heroes. One of them, General Aulich, a German, had said to the court-martial: "The King commanded me to take an oath on the Constitution. I obeyed. The King did not keep his oath. I have kept mine." Among the martyrs was another German, Count Charles Leiningen, a cousin of Queen Victoria of England. At the outbreak of the revolution he repeatedly asked the War Office at Vienna to be transferred to a non-Hungarian regiment. His request remained unheard; he stayed, fought gallantly, and shared the fate of his comrades.

This execution of prisoners of war was, of course, contrary to all military honour and the usages of civilized warfare. The Austrian Government justified it on the technical ground that the thirteen generals had been

Imperial officers and therefore deserters and traitors. The real motive was the revenge of impotence.

The Sixth of October had been chosen as the date for "constituting a terrible example" at Arad because it was the anniversary of the last Vienna revolution and the murder of General Latour. On the same day, at Budapest, Count Louis Batthyány, the first Hungarian Premier, was executed at dawn by a firing party. He had always been a moderate and an opponent of Kossuth, and had exerted himself, at the risk of his popularity and even of his safety, to bring about a reconciliation between the monarch and the nation. He was now indicted before a court-martial for high treason. The evidence against him was so flimsy that the judge-advocate who prosecuted him virtually suggested squashing of the proceedings. But orders came from Vienna: guilty or not guilty, Batthyány must hang. He was sentenced to death. On the eve of the execution his wife smuggled a dagger to him, and he slashed his throat so as to avoid the disgrace of the gallows. His awful wound was dressed, but as it was found impossible to hang him, he was shot in the morning, in the same hour as the thirteen generals at Arad.

Europe stood aghast. Even at the Austrian court this wallowing in blood was disapproved. Metternich himself, as his wife records, was highly indignant over Batthyány's execution "without even the reasons stated." Ugly rumours filled the hiatus—it was whispered that the extremely handsome Batthyány had to die because on a certain occasion he had mortally wounded the feminine vanity of the Archduchess Sophie. But the legal murder of the leaders was merely the beginning. The razor was still out of its case, and slashed merrily to right and left. A reign of terror followed compared with which Windischgraetz's bloody assizes

at Vienna were an essay in Christian charity. To be sure, Haynau did not carry out his pious intention of shooting all ex-Imperial officers who held commissions in the rebel forces. Yet within a few months 114 death sentences were carried out and 1765 men, officers and civilians, received long terms in prison. Among those who suffered the death penalty were several aristocrats who had not served in the army but had voted for the resolution dethroning the Habsburgs. Two bishops were sentenced to twenty years at hard labour; two others were interned in Austrian monasteries. Bishop Horvath, Minister of Education in Kossuth's cabinet, was sentenced to death. He was still in the country, and had a narrow escape into Turkey. Kossuth himself, together with thirty leaders, was hanged *en effigie* at Budapest.

Haynau's henchmen overran the country. The bastinado was applied for the most trivial offences; even women were flogged. A country gentleman, Madersbach by name, committed suicide because he could not bear the dishonour of seeing his wife publicly whipped—her crime was that she had sheltered fugitive rebels.

The horrors of 1849 have always been associated in the memory of the Hungarian people with the name of Haynau. Brutal and bloodthirsty though that general was, in Hungary he was a mere tool. The initiative came from Schwarzenberg who completely dominated the young Emperor. The execution of the thirteen generals took place on express orders by Francis Joseph, who had denied a motion for mercy. Schwarzenberg was in his element. In vain his friends counselled moderation. He was told that the best thing he could do was to win over the Hungarians by clemency. "That's all very well," he smiled, "but first we'll do a little hanging."

Among those who advised humane treatment of the Hungarians was Bach. There is reason to believe that Schwarzenberg countermanded a decree ordering mitigation of the sentences which Bach had sent through departmental channels to Hungary. Another voice for mercy was that of Wessenberg. The veteran statesman—a glowing Austrian patriot—charged that the Emperor was made by his advisers—Schwarzenberg was understood—to found his power upon scaffolds and gibbets instead of peace and good will.

In vain the old Archduke John, too, offered his wise counsel. He suggested to the Emperor that the best way to obliterate all bitterness and to turn the Hungarians into enthusiastic subjects forever was to give them now, when they were crushed and hoped for nothing, a liberal measure of home rule. It was the course so successfully employed later in the United States after the Civil War and by the British in South Africa. It was not the course that appealed to Francis Joseph. Schwarzenberg's policy of terror prevailed.

The personal reprisals were followed by political annihilation. The ancient Hungarian constitution was declared forfeit. Not even the provisions of the Austrian Constitution of March 4, under which Hungary lost her independence but obtained at least provincial autonomy and representation in the central parliament, were to be applied. Hungary was simply incorporated in the Empire as conquered territory. The Kingdom of St. Stephen was dismembered. Croatia got a slice. Transylvania was severed. In the South of Hungary a new province—the Serb Voyvodina—was created. The self-government of counties, bulwark of ancient liberties, was abolished. A swarm of German and Czech officials were let loose upon the country. German was made the

official language not only in the administration, but also in the courts and schools. Hungary's subjugation was complete.

The fate of the Magyars may have been tragic; that of the non-Magyar nationalities was shot through by a weft of farce. Saxons, Roumanians and Croats had received high-sounding promises of reward for their loyalty. They had fought and suffered for the Imperial cause, and trusted the Imperial word. They were to find out soon enough what that word was worth. The Saxons' autonomy, granted by a Hungarian king to the first settlers and respected by Hungarian kings through six centuries, was suspended. The Croats not only did not obtain their independent Illyrian kingdom, but they were even deprived of the home rule which they had enjoyed before the revolution. Croatia was made into an Austrian province with German administration and German official language. The Slovak loyalist chieftains Stur and Hurban, and the Roumanian leader Jancu, were arrested and interned; their enthusiasm had served well against the Magyars, but now it appeared dangerous. Even so had the enthusiasm of the Tyrolese appeared dangerous to the Emperor Francis after the war of 1809. Said a Hungarian nobleman to a Croat: "What we Magyars got as a punishment you get as a reward."

This was the hour of victory. The double-headed eagle of Habsburg soared rejuvenated, phœnix-like, above the smouldering pyre of revolution. Italy lay prostrate. Sardinia, thoroughly spanked, sued for peace. The Lombard rebellion was crushed, Manin's gallant Venetian republic was conquered. The Austrian *soldatesca* once more spread its rule of blood and iron over the Northern provinces; in the Middle Italian duchies and in

the Papal domains white-coated Austrians asserted the might and majesty of Legitimacy.

The Austrian provinces proper, too, had been made safe for autocracy. Vienna, Graz, Prague, the entire province of Galicia lay motionless under the heels of martial law. The ordeal was over; the Empire was pacified. Francis Joseph, with the aid of his gallant army, had conquered his enemies. The gallant army of the Czar Nicholas, too, had had something to do with that conquest; but reference to this fact was limited to an inevitable minimum. In the great Austrian Empire, from the Carpathians to the Apennines, peace and contentment reigned. So do peace and contentment reign in a graveyard.

CHAPTER VIII

THE TRUST

I

The Hungarian surrender at Világos sealed the victory of the counter-revolution which had placed Francis Joseph on the throne. The interior problem of the Empire was solved. Emperor and Premier at last could turn their full attention to foreign politics. It was high time; for the presumptions of Prussia grew more irritating every day.

That vague yearning for national unity which ever since Napoleonic times agitated the German people, torn into twoscore states by an antiquated and rotten dynastic system, at last found articulation in the Frankfort Parliament of 1848. The old articles of confederation, under which Austria retained the presidency of the Federal Council, a loose conference of delegates appointed by the sovereigns and endowed with a more or less nominal authority only, were to be replaced by a closely-knit covenant embodying the aspiration of all Germans to form one state and one nation. The election of the Archduke John to Imperial Regent was regarded as the first step in this direction.

Here, however, the ways parted. About one-half of the delegates took the position that Austria was not a

purely German state, that, indeed, the majority of its population was non-German; that its military power rested on Hungary, and its financial strength on the Italian possessions, while by far the larger part of the people of Austria proper were Slavs. It would be an anomaly, this group argued, to include this largely non-German state in a nationally organized Germany, let alone submit to its leadership. Sooner or later the Slav majority would gain control of Austria; and Germany could not be expected to submit to the ascendency of a state which in its turn was governed by non-Germans.

This anti-Austrian or "Little Germany" party rallied around the strongest German state, Prussia, as the natural leader of a German nation from which mongrel Austria was excluded. It had a liberal left wing which also objected to the retrograde, anti-constitutional spirit of the Austrian Government, while the right wing championed the election of the Prussian King to hereditary Emperor of Germany.

On the other hand, the Austrians maintained that they were just as good Germans as the rest, that the German character of the Austrian Empire could be preserved only as long as it was a member of the German commonwealth, and that historic right and the interests of the German nation converged in assigning to Austria the leadership within the German Empire. This party of a "Greater Germany" had the support of most South German and Rhenish deputies, and, like its rival, it was split into a right and a left—the former legitimist, "black-and-yellow," the latter liberal-constitutionalist with a republican fringe. The two great parties also represented the religious cleavage of Germany; for while most of the Protestant peoples sided with the Prussian faction, practically all the Catholics were pro-Austrian.

The Frankfort Assembly spent its first nine months wrangling over the guiding principles of national consolidation. Scheme after scheme was proposed, and there was no end of lofty argument. It was characteristic of the ambiguity of Schwarzenberg's programme of November 27, 1848, that both parties read into it endòrsement of their respective positions. Then came, like the burst of a bomb, the *coup d'état* of Kremsier and the proclamation of the basic law of March 4. Up to this time not the entire Habsburg Empire had formed part of the German Confederation, but only the German-Austrian provinces and Bohemia. Neither Hungary, Galicia, nor the Lombard-Venetian Kingdom had any legal link with the Bund beyond the person of the monarch. The melting of all these provinces into a centralized state was contrary to a recently enacted provision of the German Federal Constitution which prohibited incorporation of a member of the Germanic Bund in a non-German state. The Frankfort Parliament therefore was just about making up its mind to regard the March Constitution as an indirect challenge when Schwarzenberg, lest there should be any mistake, hit it on the head with a good resounding blow.

Two days after the Kremsier coup an Austrian note was received at Frankfort. It demanded, in peremptory terms, the admission of the new centralized Austrian Empire into the German Bund; it further demanded the presidency of the Federal Executive, and it proposed a new Federal Assembly, in which Austria would have thirty-eight seats, with thirty-two for the rest of Germany. It also proposed a customs union.

What Schwarzenberg had in mind was a grandiose scheme of a united Mitteleuropa of seventy million people, the core of which was formed by a thoroughly

Germanized Austrian Empire. The charge of the Prussian party that he was trying to drive a non-German wedge into the German body politic was unjust in so far as both he and Bach, who was his chief collaborator on the plan, saw in a close union with Germany the best guaranty of the ultimate Germanization of Austrian Slavs and Hungarians. The moving spirit behind this ambitious programme was the Minister of Commerce, Bruck. He was that rare combination, a practical and successful business man with a long-range political vision, and he dreamed of a compact Greater Germany gravitating toward the East, absorbing and civilizing the Balkans, taking Constantinople, making the Black Sea into a German lake, and founding, in the end, a vast colonial empire in Western Asia. It was the original conception of what much later became known as the Berlin-Bagdad idea.

The scheme appealed to Francis Joseph. His narrow imagination could hardly grasp the magnificent background, the far-reaching potentialities, of Bruck's proposals; but he understood clearly enough that Schwarzenberg strove to secure and enlarge his status as suzerain head of Germany—indeed, that the Premier aimed at restoring the ancient Holy Roman Empire and making it a reality instead of the mere name that it had been.

To nationally-minded Germans the proposals appeared in quite a different light. With polyglot Austria possessing a majority in the central parliament, the most vital affairs of the German nation would be decided by the vote of Czech, Polish and Hungarian delegates. There was only one fitting answer to Schwarzenberg's arrogant insinuation, and the representatives of the German people proceeded to give that answer. On March 28, 1849, the Frankfort Parliament elected King Frederick William IV of Prussia to German Emperor.

It was a great moment. German national unity—a vain dream ever since the fall of the last of the Hohenstaufen—seemed realized at last. True, the decision of the Parliament involved the exclusion of a great German tribe from the renewed Empire; but so strong was the resentment aroused by Schwarzenberg's treacherous and high-handed policy among German liberals that the four votes at a preliminary division which insured the election of the Prussian King were cast by Austrians.

In this hour of humiliation it was the Prussian King who rushed to the rescue of Austrian prestige. Frederick William declined the Imperial crown with thanks. He refused to become German Emperor by the grace of the street, as he expressed himself. The reality revapourized into a dream.

Frederick William IV was a strange individual. He was an old man filled with romantic notions about legitimacy and the great German past. He dreamed of the revival of Charlemagne's Empire, and regarded the Habsburgs as the rightful heirs to the Holy Roman Crown. He also regarded himself as a great soldier, and his supreme ambition was to become captain-general of the armies of his liege lord the Emperor. At the opening of the Frankfort Parliament in June, 1848, he said to the Archduke John: "Austria must have the hereditary crown of Charlemagne, and Prussia the sword of Germany." On Francis Joseph's accession he felicitated him in terms of abject devotion, more befitting a medieval vassal than a modern sovereign. He expressed the hope that his "beloved young heroic Emperor" would be adorned by all the crowns of his grandfather. This meant, above all, the crown of the Holy Roman Empire which Francis had renounced. A few days before the Frankfort election he remarked to the Austrian Minister

that he could conceive of one Emperor only, the Roman Emperor, the natural overlord of all princes and of Christendom, and that this position belonged to Austria.

Thus, while not only the Prussian people, but a large section of the rest of Germany, staked their hopes on a Prussian-led Empire, the Prussian King himself was a frantic pro-Austrian. He was constantly at odds with his own ministers who, not unreasonably, regarded him as a phantast. One of his intimates declared that "his Majesty's mind does not work like that of any other mortal." He detested everything that smacked of constitutionalism and democracy, and the very name of Frankfort was to him an abomination. In these autocratic tendencies, as well as in his romantic fealty to Austria, he was heartily encouraged by his wife, one of the "Bavarian Sisters" and the aunt of Francis Joseph.

The Prussian Government countered Schwarzenberg's note with the scheme of the German Union. This, conceived by the King's gifted but somewhat unstable adviser General von Radowitz, was a kind of compromise between the Greater and the Little Germany ideas. Germany was to form a close-jointed federation under Prussian presidency but without the Imperial crown, and this federation then was to conclude an intimate alliance with the Austrian Empire. Frederick William personally wrote to Francis Joseph, imploring him to agree to a plan which would place him "at the head of a great whole of 70,000,000 people" and make him the arbiter of Europe. "The ruler of Austria," concluded the King, "will thus be in reality that which the Emperors of the Middle Ages aspired to be and ought to have been."

It was an alluring prospect, but not good enough for Francis Joseph. The Emperor—and his Premier—saw in

the Union nothing but a Prussian subterfuge to exclude Austria from the Bund and acquire its leadership. In a personal letter to Frederick William the young monarch, with profound thanks for his dear brother's excellent intentions, politely declined discussion of the Union plan, pleading the inexperience of his years which would not allow him to approach this difficult subject with the mature wisdom and many-sided accomplishments of the King. He begged to suggest, furthermore, that the latter would do well to concentrate all his attention on combating the evil spirit of revolution which still constituted a common menace to all upholders of the sacred heritage of law and order.

It was typical of Schwarzenberg that when his project of the Empire of seventy millions was thwarted by the opposition of Frankfort he entrenched himself behind the treaties of 1815 which his own plan had treated as mere scraps of paper. He fancied himself in the rôle of abused integrity. Besides, he knew how to exploit his strategic advantage afforded by the division at Berlin. Frederick William, staunchly backed by his Bavarian wife, tried secretly to hamper the plans of his ministers; and the Austrian Premier was aware that an appeal to the sanctity of contract and that sort of thing went straight home with the romantic fool.

Meanwhile the Prussian Government, unheedful of Austrian anger and the apprehensions of its own King, started organizing the Union and secured the adherence of most northern and some of the middle states. Harshly-worded notes travelled back and forth between Berlin and Vienna, and Frederick William worked overtime apologizing, through private channels, for the rudeness of his own ministers. At last the Hessian question brought the crisis to a head. The people of Electoral

Hesse revolted against the petty despotism of the Elector, and chased that prince across the frontier. The Federal Council at Frankfort, summoned by Austria to counterbalance the Union Parliament called by Prussia to Erfurt, gave Austria and Bavaria a mandate to restore order. Restoring order in obstreperous little duchies had ever been a favourite pastime of the Austrian Government, and it responded to the call with alacrity. The bad manners of Prussia, however, cut short the pleasant prospect of constituting a few examples at Cassel. The Prussian Government announced that as the Elector of Hesse had joined the Union, it was up to Prussia to pacify the revolt. Though both Austria and Prussia wanted the same thing done, the quarrel as to who should do it assumed a vehemence which in itself betrayed that the storm in the Hessian teacup was a mere pretext for larger issues. Presently a Bavarian division, supported by an Austrian battalion, marched into the Electorate. At the same time the Prussians occupied the road leading to Cassel, intent on stopping the Bavarian advance.

Schwarzenberg was elated. Here at last was the chance for which he had been playing. Hatred of all things Prussian was ingrained in his bones; he had said that his aim was first to humiliate, then to demolish Prussia. Early in October he had concluded, at Bregenz, an offensive alliance with the four German kings, those of Bavaria, Saxony, Württemberg, and Hanover, who were all living in mortal fear of Prussian aggrandizement. Two weeks later he accompanied Francis Joseph to Warsaw, and scored a great success with the Czar. Nicholas was furious with Prussia. He regarded the Union scheme as revolutionary, and the Prussian assistance to the Holstein rebels against Denmark as the betrayal of legitimacy. Schwarzenberg belaboured him so

skilfully that one morning at breakfast he said to Prince Charles, brother of the Prussian King, that now it was all over, he would have to invade Prussia and occupy it as far as the Vistula. The Austrian Emperor and Premier returned to Vienna with full assurances of Russian support in case of war.

From the point of view of his own policy Schwarzenberg was right. He realized, more clearly than anybody else at the Austrian court, that the struggle for hegemony in Germany could, in the nature of things, be settled only by war. He knew that the Austrian army was ill prepared to fight; he also knew that the Prussian army was prepared worse; he knew, above all, that Prussia never stood half a chance against the combined powers of Austria and Russia. This, then, was obviously the time for settlement.

On November 8 the Bavarian vanguard, pushing north toward Cassel, stumbled upon the Prussian outposts near Bronzell. A frightened Prussian fired a shot; others followed; a Prussian bugler's horse died for the cause of Little Germany. Schwarzenberg instructed his Minister at Berlin, Prokesch-Osten, to demand his passport. But the Prussian Government was scared. Prokesch-Osten found the King "in a terrible state, all broken to pieces." Poor Frederick William called Schwarzenberg his dearest friend, spoke of Francis Joseph with tears of affection streaming down his face, and declared that his only ambition in life was to become Lord High Constable of the Roman Emperor.

For a fortnight peace hung in the balance. Austrian insolence goaded Prussian public opinion into warlike fever; the battalions of conscripts and militiamen went singing into camp. All this pleased Schwarzenberg; but it displeased two powerful ladies—the Ba-

varian Sisters, Archduchess Sophie and the Queen of Prussia. At last Russian threats and an Austrian ultimatum brought Prussia on her knees; and Sophie, speaking through her sovereign son, dampened the martial ardour of Schwarzenberg. The King despatched his Foreign Minister, Manteuffel, with special letters to the Emperor and his mother. On November 28 the Prussian envoy and the Austrian Premier met at the Crown Inn at Olmütz. They conferred for two days; when it was over the Prussian surrender was all but unconditional. Prussia consented to evacuate Hesse-Cassel and to grant free transit to the Austrian division ordered by the Federal Council to disarm Holstein. This was bad enough; it was worse that Prussia was obliged to demobilize at once, while Austria was free to keep her army on war footing. It was this provision above all, throwing Prussia on her rival's mercy, that hurt Prussian pride to the quick.

Peace was celebrated by Austrians and Prussians jointly bullying Hesse-Cassel into submission to a worthless prince. As the Prussian Government had already previously formally disavowed the Union the Austrian victory was complete. Manteuffel even intimated that Prussia would agree to the admission of the entire Austrian Empire, as reorganized by the March Constitution, into the Bund, in return for a share in the presidency; but Schwarzenberg would not hear of the condition, and the matter was referred to future settlement.

In one year of his stewardship Prince Felix Schwarzenberg raised the Empire from the depths of anarchy and defeat to a pinnacle of power which it had not reached since the days of the Congress of Vienna. It was his firmness, his courage, his all-steel will that stamped out the revolution within and crushed the enemy without.

Austria, though she surely was not loved, was feared and respected once more in the councils of nations.

But *was* the enemy crushed? After all, Prussia had not lost a single man, a single cannon, a single square foot of territory. Her material strength remained intact. *Avilir puis démolir*—yes, Schwarzenberg had carried out the first half of his device, but he stopped short of carrying out the second. It was a dangerous omission. It would have been far safer to destroy Prussia after mortally wronging her; for her defeat was of the kind that reinforces the morale of a nation with girders of hatred and pillars of revenge.

II

Austrian liberals did not rejoice long in the new Constitution even as a second best. Signs abounded that the Government did not take its own charter any too seriously. With its original sin of being imposed from above by a *putsch*, and with all its minor faults, the Constitution represented a system of checks and restraints upon arbitrary authority—it yielded, or at least purported to yield, protection against military and police encroachment. But it soon became evident that these checks and restraints existed on paper only. More than half the Empire, including the capital Vienna, was still subject to martial law; here extra-legal conditions prevailed legally, as it were. But even in the other half the military, and still more the police, rode roughshod over the population. As the scoffer had prophesied, equality before the law came to mean that nobody's rights were respected.

Moreover, the entire edifice of the new Constitution rested on the self-governing communes forming the constituencies of the district assemblies, provincial diets,

and central parliament. Now, months passed and nothing was done to call into life these communes; consequently the central parliament, too, receded into the mists of an uncertain future.

But even this shadow constitution was too much for some people. Foremost amongst its opponents was the nobility. Stadion, indeed, had gone too far in his zealous advocacy of bourgeois control. The aristocracy as a factor in Austrian life could not be legislated away overnight; its feudal privileges had been abolished, but it still retained most of its social power, and used it for combating, by fair means or foul, the detested charter.

The fury of the reactionaries was finally vented through a pamphlet published in the spring of 1851 and entitled *Confessions of a Soldier*. It culminated in the assertion that responsible ministry and parliamentarism were the fruits of revolution, and that the enfranchisement of all nationalities and equal rights for all citizens were sheer communism.

This, of course, was the regulation line of conservative argument. What gave the pamphlet an unusual touch was the extraordinary vehemence with which it punished the members of Government. Schwarzenberg was dismissed with a comparatively mild dose, but the author exulted over Stadion's derangement as the just and merited visitation of God for his wicked liberalism. His pet abomination, however, was Bach, who, he asserted, had climbed to his high post on the shoulders of the mob, and who was nothing but a grafter, a procurer and a secret communist.

Liberals had been clapped into gaol for whispering much milder stuff in a café. This vitriolic libel circulated freely for days before the almighty police took half-hearted measures to suppress it. Obviously this out-

spoken military confessor must have been several notches above the degree of a private. As a matter of fact, Major Babarczy, aide-de-camp to the Emperor, did not care if all the world knew that he was the author of the "Confessions." He made no bones about the fact, either, that his views coincided exactly with those of Field Marshal Prince Windischgraetz.

Schwarzenberg was not the man to misread a portent like that. The time had come for him to act. Not that he was unwilling. On the contrary. With a few hundred revolutionists hanged, a few thousand imprisoned, with fifty thousand Hungarian *honvéds* impressed into Imperial regiments, with a strenuously administered state of siege solving the remainder of internal problems, all he needed was the victory over Prussia at Olmütz in order to clear up comfortably, once for all, the whole damned constitutional mess. Besides, he had pledged his word. He had, at Warsaw, secured the Czar's support against Prussia by the promise of revoking the Constitution.

However, when he approached his colleagues on the subject he met with unexpected resistance. Bach, though his heart—such as he had—was with the Constitution, was easily persuaded into persuading himself that revocation was the only right course. But the Minister of Justice—for Bach had succeeded Stadion at the Department of Interior—Schmerling, a leader of the Greater Germany party and former President of the Frankfort Assembly, a Liberal of the right wing, staunchly resisted the idea of another *coup d'état*. The Ministers of Commerce and Finance respectively, the Barons Bruck and Krauss, equally disapproved, though for reasons of a different order. They argued that the abolition of constitutionalism would endanger the credit of the State.

Schmerling's scruples appeared preposterous to Schwarzenberg, but the financial argument was one which he could understand, and he promised Krauss to delay action until the loan which was then being negotiated was safely under roof. Meanwhile, uneasy over the division in the Cabinet, he looked around for allies.

There was among the still uncarried-out measures of the Constitution, one providing for the creation of a Reichsrath or Imperial Senate, a council appointed by the Emperor to be consulted at his pleasure on matters of legislation. It occurred to Schwarzenberg that he might use this body as a counterweight to his recalcitrant Cabinet and as a base of operations against the Constitution. He advised the Emperor to call the Reichsrath into life. On December 5, 1850, Francis Joseph summoned Baron Kübeck and appointed him President of the Reichsrath, commanding him at the same time to organize that body.

In every way but one Charles Frederick Baron Kübeck was a typical son of the *ancien régime* in Austria. The one exception concerned his origin. He was the son of a tailor. Sons of tailors did not, as a rule, rise to the highest dignities in the state under the Franciscan dispensation. He was born in the little Moravian town of Iglau in 1780, the year of Joseph II's accession. As a young man he left the army, for which he had been destined, for the civil service, and by his keen mind, extreme industry, and unusual accomplishments attracted the notice of Count Philip Stadion, Francis's brilliant Finance Minister. Stadion appointed him his assistant—unheard-of preferment for an official of ungenteel birth. He made himself indispensable, and retained the post of general factotum under Stadion's successors until 1840, when, at the age of sixty, he was made President of the

Treasury Board. He had meanwhile gained the friendship of the omnipotent Chancellor, Prince Metternich, and the two men—Metternich was a few years older—remained on terms of intimacy unto the last.

In his youth Kübeck was a fervent disciple of Josephine liberalism. His diaries from that period brim with caustic comment on the stupidities and shortcomings of the Franciscan régime. Gradually, however, as he grew older, he became disillusioned with the slogans and principles of reform, and unfolded into a staunch upholder of autocracy. The conversion was slow and stagewise, the fruit of much hard thought and soul-searching. His diaries furnish ample proof that with this deeply religious and intensely honourable nature the change of sides, far from being prompted by sordid worldly motives, was preceded by a true change of mind and heart.

After the March days of 1848 he belonged to the inner circle of the Archduchess Sophie which worked for a counter-revolution. On the evening of October 7 a boisterous party of national guards invaded his apartment opposite the Imperial Arsenal, and from the windows fired upon the troops. For several hours Kübeck's life was not worth a dollar's purchase; had the revolutionists suspected that he was plotting with Sophie and the military party to restore the old order they would have torn him to bits as they had torn Latour the day before. That night's experience was decisive. He had been a reasoned conservative; he now turned into a violent reactionary. After the fall of Vienna he advocated a military dictatorship for the whole Empire, with the Prince Windischgraetz as dictator. He participated in the councils at Olmütz, but his proposals were voted down. For the time being Stadion's constitutional plans prevailed.

When his mental collapse forced Stadion—his patron's

nephew—to retire from office Kübeck hoped to succeed him and was supported by Windischgraetz. But after his Hungarian failure the near-dictator's word was somewhat depreciated. Moreover, Schwarzenberg did not want Kübeck in his Cabinet. He had too high an opinion of Kübeck's character. What he needed in the strategic position of the Minister of Interior was a pliable and intelligent tool like Bach. So Bach got the appointment, and Kübeck was kicked upstairs into the chairmanship of the Federal Commission which Austria and Prussia set up at this time to liquidate the mess of the Frankfort Parliament.

Schwarzenberg was not afraid of Kübeck—he was not afraid of Satan himself; but he mildly disliked him; he had great respect for the old man's ability, but held that in matters concerning honour he was much too fussy and impractical. Kübeck, on his part, could not stomach Schwarzenberg. Without any smug sense of superiority he, the tailor's son, despised the feudal prince's elastic code. He did not mind Schwarzenberg the bully; he objected to Schwarzenberg the plunger. He violently disapproved of the Premier's anti-Prussian swagger; he held that closest co-operation with Prussia, even at the expense of minor points of prestige, was essential if revolution was to be kept in check. On this point, as on most others, his views coincided with those of Prince Metternich, with whom he carried on a lively and at times affectionate correspondence. They agreed, above all, in condemning Schwarzenberg's constitutional game as both dangerous and dishonourable. Parliamentarism was a folly, but its pretense was a folly and also a crime; as to municipal autonomy, free press, trial by jury, equality before the law, and all that truck, they were part and parcel of the revolutionary swindle.

III

Schwarzenberg had carried reaction to triumph; yet reactionaries hated Schwarzenberg. To the feudal nobility the Prince, sponsor of Stadion's liberal constitution, friend of that arch scoundrel and secret communist Bach, appeared little better than a traitor. The hopes and aspirations of the High Tories centered in the Prince Windischgraetz; to them he was still the hero of Prague and Vienna, the kingmaker of Olmütz, the slayer of the revolutionary dragon. With Windischgraetz was allied the political brain of the extreme Right, Baron Kübeck; and behind him, in his Brussels exile, loomed the ancient figure of Metternich, bland and sinister, resembling with his petrified smile a male Sybil of the ages pronouncing the oracles of wisdom.

Not that these Big Three of counter-revolution agreed on every point. Metternich and Windischgraetz were, in a sense, federalists; they favoured provincial autonomy provided the nobility were left in control of the provinces. They believed in an aristocratic *laisser-faire;* they hated and feared centralism; it was new-fangled, un-Austrian, revolutionary. Kübeck, on the other hand, despised the sloppy ways of the old patriarchal-feudal régime and championed a strong centralized bureaucracy.

But this difference was cancelled by their fundamental agreement. They held that by involving the young Emperor in his constitutional comedy Schwarzenberg was jeopardizing the success and meaning of the counter-revolution. The abdication of Ferdinand was necessary just because he was bound by his oath to uphold the constitution both in Austria and in Hungary. His nephew was placed on the throne just because he was bound by no such oaths. But now, by proclaiming the

Prince Felix Schwarzenberg

After the painting by M. Stahl

The Archduke Francis Charles of Austria

1848

charter was a sworn enemy of all constitutions. In the main the Constitution embodied the ideas of the Minister of Interior, Count Stadion, a staunch Josephine liberal. It was centralistic, German, and equalitarian. But the whole-hearted elaboration of those ideas was thwarted by the interference of Field-Marshal Prince Windischgraetz. It was part of the latter's contracted reward for downing the revolution that he should have a voice in working out the new form of government—and pledges given to successful generals are, unlike those given to unsuccessful parliaments, not usually broken.

Windischgraetz detested everything that Stadion prized high. Above all, he detested the idea of committing the young Emperor to a new set of promises. What was the use of removing Ferdinand if his successor was to involve himself in the same beastly nuisance? But the excellent Field-Marshal was given to understand by his brother-in-law the Premier that a constitution was, under the circumstances, a necessary evil. The stress lay on "under the circumstances." So, not without grumbling, the dictator waived his objection to the principle, and braced himself to prune, at least, its excrescences.

Next, the Field-Marshal hated centralization, for he had been told by the Prince Metternich that centralization was a vicious French article, a product of the Revolution. He further hated everything that smacked of liberalism. He hated the bourgeoisie, parliamentary institutions, and equality before the law. His ideal was an autocracy tempered by the privileges of the feudal estates, ruling by means of the mailed fist; and he regarded himself as the mailed fist. He was a federalist, because he had been told by the Prince Metternich that the nobility, ensconced in their provincial strongholds, formed the

strongest bulwark against innovation whether by mobs or by bureaucrats.

Schwarzenberg, who refereed the fight between the Minister and the Field Marshal, had no more love for constitutions, liberal principles, and the middle class, than his haughty relation. But he was an opportunist, and he also had a hearty contempt for the Austrian aristocracy.

> "It would be easy enough," he said, "to give the Constitution an aristocratic complexion. But to impart to our aristocracy vitality and power of resistance is utterly impossible, for that would require honest, intelligent and courageous aristocrats, and these simply do not exist. I do not in the entire Empire know twelve men of our class who under the present circumstances could make themselves useful in an Upper House."

Intimacy with the mental processes of his brother-in-law may have influenced the Premier's judgment. In any event, he decided in favour of Stadion's liberal centralism as against Windischgraetz's conservative federalism. To be sure, to him centralism was the important thing, and liberalism a temporary annoyance. As a stunt, however, to gain time Stadion's constitution was not bad. For Schwarzenberg considered the dispersal of the Kremsier assembly as a mere preliminary. The Hungarian rebellion was not yet suppressed; the Italian question still awaited settlement. Once those difficulties were disposed of "by the gallantry and honour of our glorious army," the whole constitution business could be swept aside "like as much dirt." To Schwarzenberg a pledge meant an expedient, not an obligation. He could wait—he was not a white-coated, gold-laced bull in a china shop like that fool brother-in-law of his. "Sufficient unto the

day is the evil thereof," he used to repeat as the motto of his statesmanship, secretly amused that he, of all men, should choose a Biblical device. Was he aware that he merely periphrased the Metternichian "Time gained, everything gained"? Probably not; for he did not, as a rule, worry over abstractions.

That the new constitution was proclaimed in an incomplete draft was in keeping with Austrian tradition. It bore the stamp of something done in a hurry. Baron Wessenberg called it an improvization, a mere makeshift to help the Government out of an embarrassment.

As a makeshift, however, the new charter did its duty well. It smothered the tendencies of decentralization, to the federalism of a democratic, anti-feudal pattern which had prevailed at Kremsier. It also—and herein lay its innermost meaning—abolished, by a single stroke, the independence of Hungary, a legal fiction when things went well, for the past year an extremely worrying reality. It was a "Constitution for the Austrian Empire," establishing a central executive and legislative at Vienna. In this respect the new basic law was revolutionary.

On the other hand, no reference was made to Lombardy and Venetia. That question was shelved pending a decision of arms.

In giving his assent to some of the liberal provisions—such as those endowing the central parliament with powers of legislation and appropriation, introducing trial by jury, and granting civil liberties, Schwarzenberg was moved, not so much by Stadion's arguments, as by another opportunistic consideration. At this time Austria was engaged in a bitter struggle with Prussia over the leadership of the Germanic Confederation. In order to win popular support in the German states it was essential that Austria should not appear lagging behind her rival in the

matter of political reform. The Premier, utterly contemptuous of public opinion, was prepared to throw a sop to it.

Simultaneously with the proclamation of the new Constitution a whole set of administrative improvements was inaugurated by the various departments. Most important of these was the land reform—regulation of the relation between the liberated serfs and their former overlords through a complicated system of land expropriation and compensation. Thus the great work begun by Joseph II was brought to conclusion. For the successful settlement of this most burning of social problems Bach was primarily responsible. Instinctive solidarity with his clan may have actuated the descendant of serfs; but his conscious purpose was to turn the peasantry, core of the Austrian population, into loyal supporters of the Crown. This end he fully achieved; but Prince Windischgraetz remained unconvinced. "The most rabid communist," wrote the noble Field-Marshal to the Emperor, "has not yet dared to demand that which your Majesty's own Government has accomplished."

The reform wave of the ministries was a good omen. Bad ones were not lacking. According to the Constitution, the Upper House of the imperial parliament was to consist of representatives elected by the provincial assemblies. But these provincial assemblies still had to be created. The date for elections was set for the autumn of 1850—a year and a half ahead. Was the Metternichian "Time gained, everything gained" at work here once more?

Then there was the sad fate of Count Stadion. The author of the Constitution, the only liberal in the Cabinet, had for some time been the victim of exhausted nerves. His vitality was slowly ebbing away; and the Kremsier

coup d'état, of which he had to be the unwilling instrument, dealt him a last blow. He suffered another collapse, and a few weeks later his mind darkened forever.

V

By abolishing the independence of Hungary the Schwarzenberg Government attempted to cook game that had to be bagged first. In that incalculable country (the new basic law called it a province) the achievements of the March revolution had not petered out, as in Austria, in revels of oratory and incompetence. In possession of their new freedom, as enacted by the statute of April 11, 1848, the Magyars proceeded to defend it, arm in hand, against the counter-revolution with a gallantry and devotion that won for them the sympathy and respect of the world.

The Court, true to the Habsburg tradition of doing everything half-way, first allowed the Magyars to organize an army, and then bullied them into making use of it. The rebellion of the South Slavs and Roumanians, provoked by the Magyar refusal to share the gains of the revolution, was, first clandestinely, then openly supported by the Imperial Government. But the Magyars proved equal to the emergency. They drowned the Serb outbreak in blood, and chased Jellačić's Croat regiments across the frontier.

The conquest of the Vienna revolution turned the fortunes of war against the Hungarians. Flushed with his easy victory, the Field-Marshal Windischgraetz invaded the rebel kingdom. The untrained levies, supported by a few Magyar regiments late of the Imperial army, melted away before the overwhelming numbers and superior training of the Austrians. The rebels retreated

east and north, and early in January Windischgraetz occupied Budapest. The last of his prophecies was thus fulfilled.

For the young Emperor the moment afforded a wonderful chance. This, indeed, was the time to exercise that magnanimity which history has always proved the best counsel of statesmanship. The Magyar Government was in flight; the rebellion was on the brink of collapse. A group of moderate leaders, opposed from the outset to the extreme policies of Kossuth, called on Prince Windischgraetz in the conquered capital. The committee was headed by Count Louis Batthyány, the Premier. But the Duke of Alba's belated reincarnation lived up to his character. "I do not negotiate with rebels" was his brusque message to the parlamentaires.

For the Magyars nothing was left but fight to a finish. And now the Prince Windischgraetz, who would not negotiate, showed that he could not fight. He had established his fame as a great general by subduing a few hundred armed students at Prague, and a few thousand untrained national guards at Vienna; but this was a different business. Adversity steeled the Magyar will to resistance. The rebel forces were rallying on all sides. Windischgraetz, instead of following up his initial success and crushing the dazed enemy with a single blow, issued proclamations and played Fabian tactics. The Magyar commander, Görgei, like Grant graduate of a military school turned chemist in civilian life, exploited brilliantly Windischgraetz's mistakes and won a series of victories against odds.

The extremist party now had full control at Debrecen, the temporary capital. On April 14 the Magyar parliament passed a resolution solemnly declaring the House of Habsburg forfeit of the crown of Hungary and pro-

claiming the republic. Kossuth was elected head of the provisional government with the title of Governor.

On the same day the Prince Windischgraetz was removed from command by order of the Emperor.

The Debrecen resolution was the hardest blow that had befallen the dynasty for centuries. The largest and, next to Lombardy, richest of its provinces, the main reservoir of its man power, severed itself from the Empire. Only total annihilation of the rebel forces could now recover Hungary. But for this end more troops were needed; and troops the Imperial Government had none to spare. The bulk of the Imperial Army was engaged elsewhere. One hundred and fifty thousand men were required in Italy to earn for Austria the undying hatred of that ancient nation. Fifty thousand more were needed in Austria proper—in Vienna, Graz, Prague and other cities—to keep down a population which, the Government boasted, had enthusiastically accepted the new dispensation. The Austrian army in Hungary numbered eighty thousand; but this was a beaten army, in full retreat along all lines.

The alternatives were to acquiesce in the loss of Hungary and evacuate that country; or to give up Lombardy and Venetia and send Radetzky's army against the Hungarians; or to appeal to foreign aid. Of the three, the first two were unthinkable. There remained but the third. The Holy Alliance, that time-hallowed instrument to defend autocracy, was still in existence. The King of Prussia and the Emperor of Russia were still bound in honour—and by very real self-interest—to come to the assistance of their brother the Emperor of Austria against his rebellious subjects. The success of the Hungarians would have struck a death blow to legitimacy; it might have precipitated all Europe into the whirlpool of revolt.

Francis Joseph and his Premier first knocked at the door of the Prussian King. True, the Hohenzollerns were upstarts and Prussia an ancient rival, just at this time insolently challenging Austrian ascendency in the German Bund. Still, Prussia was a German state and its King a German Prince; and on repeated occasions Francis Joseph had emphasized that he regarded himself first and foremost a German Prince too. Besides, the best personal relations obtained between him and the aged King Frederick William IV whose Queen was a sister of the Archduchess Sophie, the Emperor's mother.

The Prussian Government was willing to help, but demanded by way of compensation that Austria should consent to the dissolution of the Bund and to the organization of a North German alliance under Prussian hegemony. This, of course, was out of the question. Remained, as last resort, the appeal to the Czar.

The Emperor Nicholas of Russia regarded himself as the protector-in-chief of the monarchical principle in all Christendom. It was with him, brother of the high-strung Alexander, founder of the Holy Alliance, a mystic sense of mission, romantic core of an otherwise harsh and matter-of-fact nature. In the year 1833 he had met the aged Emperor Franz at Münchengrätz. The covenant was renewed, and Nicholas promised the Austrian ruler that he would protect with all his might the latter's son and successor. When Francis Joseph ascended the throne the Czar assured him in exuberant terms of his friendship and affection, and reaffirmed the pledge given to the grandfather.

Although he favoured the alliance with Russia, Schwarzenberg was reluctant to avail himself of Russian aid, afraid lest the Czar should take advantage of Austria's plight and exact too big a price. He also was worried

about prestige, and felt that conquering Hungary with foreign assistance implied moral defeat for Austria. There was, however, nothing else to do, and Nicholas was approached.

The Czar's response was quick and generous. From the beginning of the war, he wrote to Francis Joseph, he had felt that Austria was fighting for the sacred heritage of legitimacy. Austria's cause was his own. Without even referring to the question of compensation or reward, he sent an army of 200,000 to subdue Hungary. From the north and east the Russians poured into the unhappy country. Against such odds all the Magyar heroism availed nothing. Within six weeks it was all over. Kossuth's government fled across the Turkish border, and Görgei, realizing the futility of further slaughter, recommended surrender. On August 13, 1849, the main Hungarian army laid down arms at Világos. It was by way of a deliberate insult to Austrian pride that Görgei capitulated, not to the Austrian commander Haynau, but to the Russian generalissimo Prince Paskievitch. "Hungary lies prostrate at your Majesty's feet," the latter telegraphed to the Czar.

Nicholas recommended magnanimity toward the crushed foe. "Let us thank God," he wrote to Francis Joseph, "for the cessation of bloodshed, and for the opportunity to exercise the most beautiful of our sovereign rights, namely, a well-considered clemency." And, a fortnight later: "Just severity toward the leaders, and forgiveness to the misguided mass seem to me the only practical means of securing lasting peace."

The Russian heir to the throne, Alexander, whom his father had sent down to Hungary, and Prince Paskievitch also exerted themselves to alleviate the fate of the prisoners. It was in vain. Francis Joseph replied to the Czar

that he would be glad to exercise mercy if he were in the position to obey his personal feelings. But the welfare of the State, he wrote, prescribed utmost severity as supreme duty.

The Austrian commander-in-chief, General Haynau, was an excellent soldier, but he had besmirched his name by the atrocities he committed in suppressing the revolt in Italy. At Brescia he hanged right and left, and ordered women to be flogged for the slightest offences. His own chief Radetzky likened him to a razor which one must put back into its case as soon as one has finished using it. This time the razor was not put back. The fate of the Hungarian prisoners was left in his hands. He announced that he owed it "to the world and to the Austrian army" to constitute a terrible example.

Russian intervention saved the life of Görgei, to whom Paskievitch personally had pledged safety. He was interned at Klagenfurt. But thirteen other Hungarian generals were executed at Arad on October 6, 1849—four were shot and nine hanged. They met their death like heroes. One of them, General Aulich, a German, had said to the court-martial: "The King commanded me to take an oath on the Constitution. I obeyed. The King did not keep his oath. I have kept mine." Among the martyrs was another German, Count Charles Leiningen, a cousin of Queen Victoria of England. At the outbreak of the revolution he repeatedly asked the War Office at Vienna to be transferred to a non-Hungarian regiment. His request remained unheard; he stayed, fought gallantly, and shared the fate of his comrades.

This execution of prisoners of war was, of course, contrary to all military honour and the usages of civilized warfare. The Austrian Government justified it on the technical ground that the thirteen generals had been

Imperial officers and therefore deserters and traitors. The real motive was the revenge of impotence.

The Sixth of October had been chosen as the date for "constituting a terrible example" at Arad because it was the anniversary of the last Vienna revolution and the murder of General Latour. On the same day, at Budapest, Count Louis Batthyány, the first Hungarian Premier, was executed at dawn by a firing party. He had always been a moderate and an opponent of Kossuth, and had exerted himself, at the risk of his popularity and even of his safety, to bring about a reconciliation between the monarch and the nation. He was now indicted before a court-martial for high treason. The evidence against him was so flimsy that the judge-advocate who prosecuted him virtually suggested squashing of the proceedings. But orders came from Vienna: guilty or not guilty, Batthyány must hang. He was sentenced to death. On the eve of the execution his wife smuggled a dagger to him, and he slashed his throat so as to avoid the disgrace of the gallows. His awful wound was dressed, but as it was found impossible to hang him, he was shot in the morning, in the same hour as the thirteen generals at Arad.

Europe stood aghast. Even at the Austrian court this wallowing in blood was disapproved. Metternich himself, as his wife records, was highly indignant over Batthyány's execution "without even the reasons stated." Ugly rumours filled the hiatus—it was whispered that the extremely handsome Batthyány had to die because on a certain occasion he had mortally wounded the feminine vanity of the Archduchess Sophie. But the legal murder of the leaders was merely the beginning. The razor was still out of its case, and slashed merrily to right and left. A reign of terror followed compared with which Windischgraetz's bloody assizes

at Vienna were an essay in Christian charity. To be sure, Haynau did not carry out his pious intention of shooting all ex-Imperial officers who held commissions in the rebel forces. Yet within a few months 114 death sentences were carried out and 1765 men, officers and civilians, received long terms in prison. Among those who suffered the death penalty were several aristocrats who had not served in the army but had voted for the resolution dethroning the Habsburgs. Two bishops were sentenced to twenty years at hard labour; two others were interned in Austrian monasteries. Bishop Horvath, Minister of Education in Kossuth's cabinet, was sentenced to death. He was still in the country, and had a narrow escape into Turkey. Kossuth himself, together with thirty leaders, was hanged *en effigie* at Budapest.

Haynau's henchmen overran the country. The bastinado was applied for the most trivial offences; even women were flogged. A country gentleman, Madersbach by name, committed suicide because he could not bear the dishonour of seeing his wife publicly whipped—her crime was that she had sheltered fugitive rebels.

The horrors of 1849 have always been associated in the memory of the Hungarian people with the name of Haynau. Brutal and bloodthirsty though that general was, in Hungary he was a mere tool. The initiative came from Schwarzenberg who completely dominated the young Emperor. The execution of the thirteen generals took place on express orders by Francis Joseph, who had denied a motion for mercy. Schwarzenberg was in his element. In vain his friends counselled moderation. He was told that the best thing he could do was to win over the Hungarians by clemency. "That's all very well," he smiled, "but first we'll do a little hanging."

Among those who advised humane treatment of the Hungarians was Bach. There is reason to believe that Schwarzenberg countermanded a decree ordering mitigation of the sentences which Bach had sent through departmental channels to Hungary. Another voice for mercy was that of Wessenberg. The veteran statesman—a glowing Austrian patriot—charged that the Emperor was made by his advisers—Schwarzenberg was understood—to found his power upon scaffolds and gibbets instead of peace and good will.

In vain the old Archduke John, too, offered his wise counsel. He suggested to the Emperor that the best way to obliterate all bitterness and to turn the Hungarians into enthusiastic subjects forever was to give them now, when they were crushed and hoped for nothing, a liberal measure of home rule. It was the course so successfully employed later in the United States after the Civil War and by the British in South Africa. It was not the course that appealed to Francis Joseph. Schwarzenberg's policy of terror prevailed.

The personal reprisals were followed by political annihilation. The ancient Hungarian constitution was declared forfeit. Not even the provisions of the Austrian Constitution of March 4, under which Hungary lost her independence but obtained at least provincial autonomy and representation in the central parliament, were to be applied. Hungary was simply incorporated in the Empire as conquered territory. The Kingdom of St. Stephen was dismembered. Croatia got a slice. Transylvania was severed. In the South of Hungary a new province—the Serb Voyvodina—was created. The self-government of counties, bulwark of ancient liberties, was abolished. A swarm of German and Czech officials were let loose upon the country. German was made the

official language not only in the administration, but also in the courts and schools. Hungary's subjugation was complete.

The fate of the Magyars may have been tragic; that of the non-Magyar nationalities was shot through by a weft of farce. Saxons, Roumanians and Croats had received high-sounding promises of reward for their loyalty. They had fought and suffered for the Imperial cause, and trusted the Imperial word. They were to find out soon enough what that word was worth. The Saxons' autonomy, granted by a Hungarian king to the first settlers and respected by Hungarian kings through six centuries, was suspended. The Croats not only did not obtain their independent Illyrian kingdom, but they were even deprived of the home rule which they had enjoyed before the revolution. Croatia was made into an Austrian province with German administration and German official language. The Slovak loyalist chieftains Stur and Hurban, and the Roumanian leader Jancu, were arrested and interned; their enthusiasm had served well against the Magyars, but now it appeared dangerous. Even so had the enthusiasm of the Tyrolese appeared dangerous to the Emperor Francis after the war of 1809. Said a Hungarian nobleman to a Croat: "What we Magyars got as a punishment you get as a reward."

This was the hour of victory. The double-headed eagle of Habsburg soared rejuvenated, phœnix-like, above the smouldering pyre of revolution. Italy lay prostrate. Sardinia, thoroughly spanked, sued for peace. The Lombard rebellion was crushed, Manin's gallant Venetian republic was conquered. The Austrian *soldatesca* once more spread its rule of blood and iron over the Northern provinces; in the Middle Italian duchies and in

the Papal domains white-coated Austrians asserted the might and majesty of Legitimacy.

The Austrian provinces proper, too, had been made safe for autocracy. Vienna, Graz, Prague, the entire province of Galicia lay motionless under the heels of martial law. The ordeal was over; the Empire was pacified. Francis Joseph, with the aid of his gallant army, had conquered his enemies. The gallant army of the Czar Nicholas, too, had had something to do with that conquest; but reference to this fact was limited to an inevitable minimum. In the great Austrian Empire, from the Carpathians to the Apennines, peace and contentment reigned. So do peace and contentment reign in a graveyard.

CHAPTER VIII

THE TRUST

I

The Hungarian surrender at Világos sealed the victory of the counter-revolution which had placed Francis Joseph on the throne. The interior problem of the Empire was solved. Emperor and Premier at last could turn their full attention to foreign politics. It was high time; for the presumptions of Prussia grew more irritating every day.

That vague yearning for national unity which ever since Napoleonic times agitated the German people, torn into twoscore states by an antiquated and rotten dynastic system, at last found articulation in the Frankfort Parliament of 1848. The old articles of confederation, under which Austria retained the presidency of the Federal Council, a loose conference of delegates appointed by the sovereigns and endowed with a more or less nominal authority only, were to be replaced by a closely-knit covenant embodying the aspiration of all Germans to form one state and one nation. The election of the Archduke John to Imperial Regent was regarded as the first step in this direction.

Here, however, the ways parted. About one-half of the delegates took the position that Austria was not a

purely German state, that, indeed, the majority of its population was non-German; that its military power rested on Hungary, and its financial strength on the Italian possessions, while by far the larger part of the people of Austria proper were Slavs. It would be an anomaly, this group argued, to include this largely non-German state in a nationally organized Germany, let alone submit to its leadership. Sooner or later the Slav majority would gain control of Austria; and Germany could not be expected to submit to the ascendency of a state which in its turn was governed by non-Germans.

This anti-Austrian or "Little Germany" party rallied around the strongest German state, Prussia, as the natural leader of a German nation from which mongrel Austria was excluded. It had a liberal left wing which also objected to the retrograde, anti-constitutional spirit of the Austrian Government, while the right wing championed the election of the Prussian King to hereditary Emperor of Germany.

On the other hand, the Austrians maintained that they were just as good Germans as the rest, that the German character of the Austrian Empire could be preserved only as long as it was a member of the German commonwealth, and that historic right and the interests of the German nation converged in assigning to Austria the leadership within the German Empire. This party of a "Greater Germany" had the support of most South German and Rhenish deputies, and, like its rival, it was split into a right and a left—the former legitimist, "black-and-yellow," the latter liberal-constitutionalist with a republican fringe. The two great parties also represented the religious cleavage of Germany; for while most of the Protestant peoples sided with the Prussian faction, practically all the Catholics were pro-Austrian.

The Frankfort Assembly spent its first nine months wrangling over the guiding principles of national consolidation. Scheme after scheme was proposed, and there was no end of lofty argument. It was characteristic of the ambiguity of Schwarzenberg's programme of November 27, 1848, that both parties read into it endorsement of their respective positions. Then came, like the burst of a bomb, the *coup d'état* of Kremsier and the proclamation of the basic law of March 4. Up to this time not the entire Habsburg Empire had formed part of the German Confederation, but only the German-Austrian provinces and Bohemia. Neither Hungary, Galicia, nor the Lombard-Venetian Kingdom had any legal link with the Bund beyond the person of the monarch. The melting of all these provinces into a centralized state was contrary to a recently enacted provision of the German Federal Constitution which prohibited incorporation of a member of the Germanic Bund in a non-German state. The Frankfort Parliament therefore was just about making up its mind to regard the March Constitution as an indirect challenge when Schwarzenberg, lest there should be any mistake, hit it on the head with a good resounding blow.

Two days after the Kremsier coup an Austrian note was received at Frankfort. It demanded, in peremptory terms, the admission of the new centralized Austrian Empire into the German Bund; it further demanded the presidency of the Federal Executive, and it proposed a new Federal Assembly, in which Austria would have thirty-eight seats, with thirty-two for the rest of Germany. It also proposed a customs union.

What Schwarzenberg had in mind was a grandiose scheme of a united Mitteleuropa of seventy million people, the core of which was formed by a thoroughly

Germanized Austrian Empire. The charge of the Prussian party that he was trying to drive a non-German wedge into the German body politic was unjust in so far as both he and Bach, who was his chief collaborator on the plan, saw in a close union with Germany the best guaranty of the ultimate Germanization of Austrian Slavs and Hungarians. The moving spirit behind this ambitious programme was the Minister of Commerce, Bruck. He was that rare combination, a practical and successful business man with a long-range political vision, and he dreamed of a compact Greater Germany gravitating toward the East, absorbing and civilizing the Balkans, taking Constantinople, making the Black Sea into a German lake, and founding, in the end, a vast colonial empire in Western Asia. It was the original conception of what much later became known as the Berlin-Bagdad idea.

The scheme appealed to Francis Joseph. His narrow imagination could hardly grasp the magnificent background, the far-reaching potentialities, of Bruck's proposals; but he understood clearly enough that Schwarzenberg strove to secure and enlarge his status as suzerain head of Germany—indeed, that the Premier aimed at restoring the ancient Holy Roman Empire and making it a reality instead of the mere name that it had been.

To nationally-minded Germans the proposals appeared in quite a different light. With polyglot Austria possessing a majority in the central parliament, the most vital affairs of the German nation would be decided by the vote of Czech, Polish and Hungarian delegates. There was only one fitting answer to Schwarzenberg's arrogant insinuation, and the representatives of the German people proceeded to give that answer. On March 28, 1849, the Frankfort Parliament elected King Frederick William IV of Prussia to German Emperor.

It was a great moment. German national unity—a vain dream ever since the fall of the last of the Hohenstaufen—seemed realized at last. True, the decision of the Parliament involved the exclusion of a great German tribe from the renewed Empire; but so strong was the resentment aroused by Schwarzenberg's treacherous and high-handed policy among German liberals that the four votes at a preliminary division which insured the election of the Prussian King were cast by Austrians.

In this hour of humiliation it was the Prussian King who rushed to the rescue of Austrian prestige. Frederick William declined the Imperial crown with thanks. He refused to become German Emperor by the grace of the street, as he expressed himself. The reality revapourized into a dream.

Frederick William IV was a strange individual. He was an old man filled with romantic notions about legitimacy and the great German past. He dreamed of the revival of Charlemagne's Empire, and regarded the Habsburgs as the rightful heirs to the Holy Roman Crown. He also regarded himself as a great soldier, and his supreme ambition was to become captain-general of the armies of his liege lord the Emperor. At the opening of the Frankfort Parliament in June, 1848, he said to the Archduke John: "Austria must have the hereditary crown of Charlemagne, and Prussia the sword of Germany." On Francis Joseph's accession he felicitated him in terms of abject devotion, more befitting a medieval vassal than a modern sovereign. He expressed the hope that his "beloved young heroic Emperor" would be adorned by all the crowns of his grandfather. This meant, above all, the crown of the Holy Roman Empire which Francis had renounced. A few days before the Frankfort election he remarked to the Austrian Minister

that he could conceive of one Emperor only, the Roman Emperor, the natural overlord of all princes and of Christendom, and that this position belonged to Austria.

Thus, while not only the Prussian people, but a large section of the rest of Germany, staked their hopes on a Prussian-led Empire, the Prussian King himself was a frantic pro-Austrian. He was constantly at odds with his own ministers who, not unreasonably, regarded him as a phantast. One of his intimates declared that "his Majesty's mind does not work like that of any other mortal." He detested everything that smacked of constitutionalism and democracy, and the very name of Frankfort was to him an abomination. In these autocratic tendencies, as well as in his romantic fealty to Austria, he was heartily encouraged by his wife, one of the "Bavarian Sisters" and the aunt of Francis Joseph.

The Prussian Government countered Schwarzenberg's note with the scheme of the German Union. This, conceived by the King's gifted but somewhat unstable adviser General von Radowitz, was a kind of compromise between the Greater and the Little Germany ideas. Germany was to form a close-jointed federation under Prussian presidency but without the Imperial crown, and this federation then was to conclude an intimate alliance with the Austrian Empire. Frederick William personally wrote to Francis Joseph, imploring him to agree to a plan which would place him "at the head of a great whole of 70,000,000 people" and make him the arbiter of Europe. "The ruler of Austria," concluded the King, "will thus be in reality that which the Emperors of the Middle Ages aspired to be and ought to have been."

It was an alluring prospect, but not good enough for Francis Joseph. The Emperor—and his Premier—saw in

the Union nothing but a Prussian subterfuge to exclude Austria from the Bund and acquire its leadership. In a personal letter to Frederick William the young monarch, with profound thanks for his dear brother's excellent intentions, politely declined discussion of the Union plan, pleading the inexperience of his years which would not allow him to approach this difficult subject with the mature wisdom and many-sided accomplishments of the King. He begged to suggest, furthermore, that the latter would do well to concentrate all his attention on combating the evil spirit of revolution which still constituted a common menace to all upholders of the sacred heritage of law and order.

It was typical of Schwarzenberg that when his project of the Empire of seventy millions was thwarted by the opposition of Frankfort he entrenched himself behind the treaties of 1815 which his own plan had treated as mere scraps of paper. He fancied himself in the rôle of abused integrity. Besides, he knew how to exploit his strategic advantage afforded by the division at Berlin. Frederick William, staunchly backed by his Bavarian wife, tried secretly to hamper the plans of his ministers; and the Austrian Premier was aware that an appeal to the sanctity of contract and that sort of thing went straight home with the romantic fool.

Meanwhile the Prussian Government, unheedful of Austrian anger and the apprehensions of its own King, started organizing the Union and secured the adherence of most northern and some of the middle states. Harshly-worded notes travelled back and forth between Berlin and Vienna, and Frederick William worked overtime apologizing, through private channels, for the rudeness of his own ministers. At last the Hessian question brought the crisis to a head. The people of Electoral

Hesse revolted against the petty despotism of the Elector, and chased that prince across the frontier. The Federal Council at Frankfort, summoned by Austria to counter-balance the Union Parliament called by Prussia to Erfurt, gave Austria and Bavaria a mandate to restore order. Restoring order in obstreperous little duchies had ever been a favourite pastime of the Austrian Government, and it responded to the call with alacrity. The bad manners of Prussia, however, cut short the pleasant prospect of constituting a few examples at Cassel. The Prussian Government announced that as the Elector of Hesse had joined the Union, it was up to Prussia to pacify the revolt. Though both Austria and Prussia wanted the same thing done, the quarrel as to who should do it assumed a vehemence which in itself betrayed that the storm in the Hessian teacup was a mere pretext for larger issues. Presently a Bavarian division, supported by an Austrian battalion, marched into the Electorate. At the same time the Prussians occupied the road leading to Cassel, intent on stopping the Bavarian advance.

Schwarzenberg was elated. Here at last was the chance for which he had been playing. Hatred of all things Prussian was ingrained in his bones; he had said that his aim was first to humiliate, then to demolish Prussia. Early in October he had concluded, at Bregenz, an offensive alliance with the four German kings, those of Bavaria, Saxony, Württemberg, and Hanover, who were all living in mortal fear of Prussian aggrandizement. Two weeks later he accompanied Francis Joseph to Warsaw, and scored a great success with the Czar. Nicholas was furious with Prussia. He regarded the Union scheme as revolutionary, and the Prussian assistance to the Holstein rebels against Denmark as the betrayal of legitimacy. Schwarzenberg belaboured him so

skilfully that one morning at breakfast he said to Prince Charles, brother of the Prussian King, that now it was all over, he would have to invade Prussia and occupy it as far as the Vistula. The Austrian Emperor and Premier returned to Vienna with full assurances of Russian support in case of war.

From the point of view of his own policy Schwarzenberg was right. He realized, more clearly than anybody else at the Austrian court, that the struggle for hegemony in Germany could, in the nature of things, be settled only by war. He knew that the Austrian army was ill prepared to fight; he also knew that the Prussian army was prepared worse; he knew, above all, that Prussia never stood half a chance against the combined powers of Austria and Russia. This, then, was obviously the time for settlement.

On November 8 the Bavarian vanguard, pushing north toward Cassel, stumbled upon the Prussian outposts near Bronzell. A frightened Prussian fired a shot; others followed; a Prussian bugler's horse died for the cause of Little Germany. Schwarzenberg instructed his Minister at Berlin, Prokesch-Osten, to demand his passport. But the Prussian Government was scared. Prokesch-Osten found the King "in a terrible state, all broken to pieces." Poor Frederick William called Schwarzenberg his dearest friend, spoke of Francis Joseph with tears of affection streaming down his face, and declared that his only ambition in life was to become Lord High Constable of the Roman Emperor.

For a fortnight peace hung in the balance. Austrian insolence goaded Prussian public opinion into warlike fever; the battalions of conscripts and militiamen went singing into camp. All this pleased Schwarzenberg; but it displeased two powerful ladies—the Ba-

varian Sisters, Archduchess Sophie and the Queen of Prussia. At last Russian threats and an Austrian ultimatum brought Prussia on her knees; and Sophie, speaking through her sovereign son, dampened the martial ardour of Schwarzenberg. The King despatched his Foreign Minister, Manteuffel, with special letters to the Emperor and his mother. On November 28 the Prussian envoy and the Austrian Premier met at the Crown Inn at Olmütz. They conferred for two days; when it was over the Prussian surrender was all but unconditional. Prussia consented to evacuate Hesse-Cassel and to grant free transit to the Austrian division ordered by the Federal Council to disarm Holstein. This was bad enough; it was worse that Prussia was obliged to demobilize at once, while Austria was free to keep her army on war footing. It was this provision above all, throwing Prussia on her rival's mercy, that hurt Prussian pride to the quick.

Peace was celebrated by Austrians and Prussians jointly bullying Hesse-Cassel into submission to a worthless prince. As the Prussian Government had already previously formally disavowed the Union the Austrian victory was complete. Manteuffel even intimated that Prussia would agree to the admission of the entire Austrian Empire, as reorganized by the March Constitution, into the Bund, in return for a share in the presidency; but Schwarzenberg would not hear of the condition, and the matter was referred to future settlement.

In one year of his stewardship Prince Felix Schwarzenberg raised the Empire from the depths of anarchy and defeat to a pinnacle of power which it had not reached since the days of the Congress of Vienna. It was his firmness, his courage, his all-steel will that stamped out the revolution within and crushed the enemy without.

Austria, though she surely was not loved, was feared and respected once more in the councils of nations.

But *was* the enemy crushed? After all, Prussia had not lost a single man, a single cannon, a single square foot of territory. Her material strength remained intact. *Avilir puis démolir*—yes, Schwarzenberg had carried out the first half of his device, but he stopped short of carrying out the second. It was a dangerous omission. It would have been far safer to destroy Prussia after mortally wronging her; for her defeat was of the kind that reinforces the morale of a nation with girders of hatred and pillars of revenge.

II

Austrian liberals did not rejoice long in the new Constitution even as a second best. Signs abounded that the Government did not take its own charter any too seriously. With its original sin of being imposed from above by a *putsch,* and with all its minor faults, the Constitution represented a system of checks and restraints upon arbitrary authority—it yielded, or at least purported to yield, protection against military and police encroachment. But it soon became evident that these checks and restraints existed on paper only. More than half the Empire, including the capital Vienna, was still subject to martial law; here extra-legal conditions prevailed legally, as it were. But even in the other half the military, and still more the police, rode roughshod over the population. As the scoffer had prophesied, equality before the law came to mean that nobody's rights were respected.

Moreover, the entire edifice of the new Constitution rested on the self-governing communes forming the constituencies of the district assemblies, provincial diets,

and central parliament. Now, months passed and nothing was done to call into life these communes; consequently the central parliament, too, receded into the mists of an uncertain future.

But even this shadow constitution was too much for some people. Foremost amongst its opponents was the nobility. Stadion, indeed, had gone too far in his zealous advocacy of bourgeois control. The aristocracy as a factor in Austrian life could not be legislated away overnight; its feudal privileges had been abolished, but it still retained most of its social power, and used it for combating, by fair means or foul, the detested charter.

The fury of the reactionaries was finally vented through a pamphlet published in the spring of 1851 and entitled *Confessions of a Soldier*. It culminated in the assertion that responsible ministry and parliamentarism were the fruits of revolution, and that the enfranchisement of all nationalities and equal rights for all citizens were sheer communism.

This, of course, was the regulation line of conservative argument. What gave the pamphlet an unusual touch was the extraordinary vehemence with which it punished the members of Government. Schwarzenberg was dismissed with a comparatively mild dose, but the author exulted over Stadion's derangement as the just and merited visitation of God for his wicked liberalism. His pet abomination, however, was Bach, who, he asserted, had climbed to his high post on the shoulders of the mob, and who was nothing but a grafter, a procurer and a secret communist.

Liberals had been clapped into gaol for whispering much milder stuff in a café. This vitriolic libel circulated freely for days before the almighty police took half-hearted measures to suppress it. Obviously this out-

spoken military confessor must have been several notches above the degree of a private. As a matter of fact, Major Babarczy, aide-de-camp to the Emperor, did not care if all the world knew that he was the author of the "Confessions." He made no bones about the fact, either, that his views coincided exactly with those of Field Marshal Prince Windischgraetz.

Schwarzenberg was not the man to misread a portent like that. The time had come for him to act. Not that he was unwilling. On the contrary. With a few hundred revolutionists hanged, a few thousand imprisoned, with fifty thousand Hungarian *honvéds* impressed into Imperial regiments, with a strenuously administered state of siege solving the remainder of internal problems, all he needed was the victory over Prussia at Olmütz in order to clear up comfortably, once for all, the whole damned constitutional mess. Besides, he had pledged his word. He had, at Warsaw, secured the Czar's support against Prussia by the promise of revoking the Constitution.

However, when he approached his colleagues on the subject he met with unexpected resistance. Bach, though his heart—such as he had—was with the Constitution, was easily persuaded into persuading himself that revocation was the only right course. But the Minister of Justice—for Bach had succeeded Stadion at the Department of Interior—Schmerling, a leader of the Greater Germany party and former President of the Frankfort Assembly, a Liberal of the right wing, staunchly resisted the idea of another *coup d'état*. The Ministers of Commerce and Finance respectively, the Barons Bruck and Krauss, equally disapproved, though for reasons of a different order. They argued that the abolition of constitutionalism would endanger the credit of the State.

Schmerling's scruples appeared preposterous to Schwarzenberg, but the financial argument was one which he could understand, and he promised Krauss to delay action until the loan which was then being negotiated was safely under roof. Meanwhile, uneasy over the division in the Cabinet, he looked around for allies.

There was among the still uncarried-out measures of the Constitution, one providing for the creation of a Reichsrath or Imperial Senate, a council appointed by the Emperor to be consulted at his pleasure on matters of legislation. It occurred to Schwarzenberg that he might use this body as a counterweight to his recalcitrant Cabinet and as a base of operations against the Constitution. He advised the Emperor to call the Reichsrath into life. On December 5, 1850, Francis Joseph summoned Baron Kübeck and appointed him President of the Reichsrath, commanding him at the same time to organize that body.

In every way but one Charles Frederick Baron Kübeck was a typical son of the *ancien régime* in Austria. The one exception concerned his origin. He was the son of a tailor. Sons of tailors did not, as a rule, rise to the highest dignities in the state under the Franciscan dispensation. He was born in the little Moravian town of Iglau in 1780, the year of Joseph II's accession. As a young man he left the army, for which he had been destined, for the civil service, and by his keen mind, extreme industry, and unusual accomplishments attracted the notice of Count Philip Stadion, Francis's brilliant Finance Minister. Stadion appointed him his assistant—unheard-of preferment for an official of ungenteel birth. He made himself indispensable, and retained the post of general factotum under Stadion's successors until 1840, when, at the age of sixty, he was made President of the

Treasury Board. He had meanwhile gained the friendship of the omnipotent Chancellor, Prince Metternich, and the two men—Metternich was a few years older—remained on terms of intimacy unto the last.

In his youth Kübeck was a fervent disciple of Josephine liberalism. His diaries from that period brim with caustic comment on the stupidities and shortcomings of the Franciscan régime. Gradually, however, as he grew older, he became disillusioned with the slogans and principles of reform, and unfolded into a staunch upholder of autocracy. The conversion was slow and stagewise, the fruit of much hard thought and soul-searching. His diaries furnish ample proof that with this deeply religious and intensely honourable nature the change of sides, far from being prompted by sordid worldly motives, was preceded by a true change of mind and heart.

After the March days of 1848 he belonged to the inner circle of the Archduchess Sophie which worked for a counter-revolution. On the evening of October 7 a boisterous party of national guards invaded his apartment opposite the Imperial Arsenal, and from the windows fired upon the troops. For several hours Kübeck's life was not worth a dollar's purchase; had the revolutionists suspected that he was plotting with Sophie and the military party to restore the old order they would have torn him to bits as they had torn Latour the day before. That night's experience was decisive. He had been a reasoned conservative; he now turned into a violent reactionary. After the fall of Vienna he advocated a military dictatorship for the whole Empire, with the Prince Windischgraetz as dictator. He participated in the councils at Olmütz, but his proposals were voted down. For the time being Stadion's constitutional plans prevailed.

When his mental collapse forced Stadion—his patron's

nephew—to retire from office Kübeck hoped to succeed him and was supported by Windischgraetz. But after his Hungarian failure the near-dictator's word was somewhat depreciated. Moreover, Schwarzenberg did not want Kübeck in his Cabinet. He had too high an opinion of Kübeck's character. What he needed in the strategic position of the Minister of Interior was a pliable and intelligent tool like Bach. So Bach got the appointment, and Kübeck was kicked upstairs into the chairmanship of the Federal Commission which Austria and Prussia set up at this time to liquidate the mess of the Frankfort Parliament.

Schwarzenberg was not afraid of Kübeck—he was not afraid of Satan himself; but he mildly disliked him; he had great respect for the old man's ability, but held that in matters concerning honour he was much too fussy and impractical. Kübeck, on his part, could not stomach Schwarzenberg. Without any smug sense of superiority he, the tailor's son, despised the feudal prince's elastic code. He did not mind Schwarzenberg the bully; he objected to Schwarzenberg the plunger. He violently disapproved of the Premier's anti-Prussian swagger; he held that closest co-operation with Prussia, even at the expense of minor points of prestige, was essential if revolution was to be kept in check. On this point, as on most others, his views coincided with those of Prince Metternich, with whom he carried on a lively and at times affectionate correspondence. They agreed, above all, in condemning Schwarzenberg's constitutional game as both dangerous and dishonourable. Parliamentarism was a folly, but its pretense was a folly and also a crime; as to municipal autonomy, free press, trial by jury, equality before the law, and all that truck, they were part and parcel of the revolutionary swindle.

III

Schwarzenberg had carried reaction to triumph; yet reactionaries hated Schwarzenberg. To the feudal nobility the Prince, sponsor of Stadion's liberal constitution, friend of that arch scoundrel and secret communist Bach, appeared little better than a traitor. The hopes and aspirations of the High Tories centered in the Prince Windischgraetz; to them he was still the hero of Prague and Vienna, the kingmaker of Olmütz, the slayer of the revolutionary dragon. With Windischgraetz was allied the political brain of the extreme Right, Baron Kübeck; and behind him, in his Brussels exile, loomed the ancient figure of Metternich, bland and sinister, resembling with his petrified smile a male Sybil of the ages pronouncing the oracles of wisdom.

Not that these Big Three of counter-revolution agreed on every point. Metternich and Windischgraetz were, in a sense, federalists; they favoured provincial autonomy provided the nobility were left in control of the provinces. They believed in an aristocratic *laisser-faire;* they hated and feared centralism; it was new-fangled, un-Austrian, revolutionary. Kübeck, on the other hand, despised the sloppy ways of the old patriarchal-feudal régime and championed a strong centralized bureaucracy.

But this difference was cancelled by their fundamental agreement. They held that by involving the young Emperor in his constitutional comedy Schwarzenberg was jeopardizing the success and meaning of the counter-revolution. The abdication of Ferdinand was necessary just because he was bound by his oath to uphold the constitution both in Austria and in Hungary. His nephew was placed on the throne just because he was bound by no such oaths. But now, by proclaiming the

Prince Felix Schwarzenberg

After the painting by M. Stahl

The Archduke Francis Charles of Austria

1848

March constitution, Francis Joseph bound himself, too. That pledge could not be kept; it was not meant to be kept. It was far safer, also far more honourable, to cast it aside at once and restore autocracy openly than to sink still deeper into deception.

Schwarzenberg ridiculed these scruples. It may have been unfortunate that he had to play a game; but it was unavoidable. He had to gain time. Had he been given to reflection and generalization, he might have argued that after all his was the ancient predicament of the ministers of Habsburg; they were always in an embarrassment, always pressed hard for a way out, always adopting such expedients as offered themselves, not worrying over the price if it only had not to be paid spot cash. After all, the Habsburg curse of never doing a whole job of anything, of starting one way and finishing another or not at all was determined by the Habsburg heritage. Half measures were the loose change, borrowed from the future at exorbitant interest, with which Habsburg rulers had to pay off the debts of their predecessors.

But Schwarzenberg was a man of action, not of reflection. He made his decisions by flashes. The game had served its purpose; there was no need for going on with it. He chuckled at the vehemence with which the feudal crowd urged him to do what he himself had long ago resolved on doing.

It did not take him long to find out that in entrenching Kübeck in the Reichsrath presidency he had scored a rather doubtful gain. Kübeck as an ally had his dangers. Kübeck wanted what he wanted; but Kübeck wanted it in Kübeck's way, not in Schwarzenberg's. In will power and perseverance quite the Premier's match, he far surpassed the latter in political and administrative knowledge, and possessed the authority conferred upon

him by an almost immemorial past spent in faithful and successful service of the Empire. Schwarzenberg had felt confident that nothing could weaken his domination over Francis Joseph; he was soon to discover that if he played on his young master's desires and emotions as a violinist plays on his fiddle, Kübeck, too, was a musician of sorts.

Presently the allies clashed. The powers of the new Reichsrath had to be specified. Kübeck demanded that the Reichsrath should be placed on an equal footing with the Cabinet. He claimed for it the right to initiate laws, and to be consulted on all legislative questions. The Emperor had to decide. Kübeck lost out on the matter of initiative; but he carried his point that all drafts of statutes and rescripts must be submitted to the Reichsrath.

This was a most important success; for it was the first time that Francis Joseph decided against Schwarzenberg. It was the first setback to the Premier's power; the first sign of the young Emperor's awakening independence. It was also the first breach in the doctrine of ministerial responsibility, one of the few achievements of the revolution which survived. Kübeck's victory wedged a body, irresponsible even to a paper parliament, in between the sovereign and his ministers. Metternich, still at Brussels, started packing his trunks. A faint fragrance of pre-March days was wafted toward his sensitive nostrils from Vienna.

Schwarzenberg, undismayed, proceeded to clean house within the precincts of the Cabinet. The Minister of Justice, Schmerling, was an upright nature and a sincere constitutionalist. He had no love for democracy, but he held that the law is law. He was profoundly indignant over the encroachments of the military and police authori-

ties, which arrested, interned, deported or imprisoned political suspects without the slightest regard for statutory rights and judicial procedure. He disapproved of the campaign of attrition against the press waged by Bach, and watched with growing alarm the advance of reaction on all sides. He expressed his views freely in public, and made friends with opposition leaders. At last he decided that he had had enough, and asked the Premier for an interview.

Schwarzenberg received his colleague reclining on a couch, surrounded by his dogs. As Schmerling entered the Premier, without rising, motioned him to a seat. Schmerling, descendant of ancient Austrian gentry, felt the blood rushing to his head, but kept his temper. He began to enumerate his grievances and referred to certain orders addressed over his head to his own subordinates.

"Never mind the details—I know all about that," the Premier cut him short. "I issued those orders myself."

"In that case, really, I am superfluous," said Schmerling, rising.

"Oh—have you discovered it at last?" sneered the Prince, stroking his favourite greyhound.

That was the end of Schmerling. Next came Bruck's turn. The Minister of Commerce was not a pronounced liberal, but he favoured parliamentarism as essential to the credit of the state, and his progressive mentality fitted ill into the new dispensation. Ignoring the violent opposition of the Reichsrath he undertook construction of the Semmering railroad, carrying the line to a height of over 3000 feet at a gradient rising, in places, to 40:1. Politicians and bureaucrats denounced it as a crazy and ruinous venture; engineers declared that no locomotive could ever climb that incline, and if it did, breathing in a fast moving train at that altitude would burst the lungs of

passengers. These fears proved exaggerated, but fortunately for his enemies Bruck overstepped his appropriations, and, weary of being hounded, he retired from the Cabinet.

IV

As a fervent partisan of autocracy Kübeck disapproved of dragging the Emperor from one broken pledge to the next; and, being just as fearless as his adversary Schwarzenberg, and much more honest, he told his young master that he did. To carry out the Constitution of March was impossible. To go on for ever governing by disregard of the law of the realm, as it was now done by Schwarzenberg, was equally impossible. Would it not be, Kübeck argued, not only much more honourable, but, in the long run, also much more expedient, to revoke laws that one could not, and did not intend to, respect?

He found a willing, even delighted, listener. Francis Joseph had been brought up in the love, worship, and expectancy of unrestricted power. "You are born to rule men"—that was the beginning and the end of his mother's educational system. He had been taught to regard power not only as a privilege, but also as a responsibility; it was his right, but also his duty, to rely only upon himself, to exercise his will. Schwarzenberg continued where Sophie had left off; he whetted an already keen appetite by parcels of fulfilment; he introduced the youth into the promised land—and then stayed with him and shared the milk and honey of power. When Schwarzenberg spoke of Imperial prerogative—did he not mean his own prerogative? When he spoke of restoring autocracy—did he not mean his own autocracy?

Kübeck injected a new element into Francis Joseph's soul. It was doubt. Hitherto everything had been so

delightfully simple and clear-cut. Schwarzenberg was splendid—so quick and strong, a true soldier; he anticipated every wish of his master—he always knew what Francis Joseph wanted, and acted accordingly. But—wasn't it just possible that sometimes Schwarzenberg acted first, and then persuaded Francis Joseph that he had carried out *his* will?

In a true autocracy, Kübeck told the Emperor, aged twenty-one, the monarch should not only reign, but also govern. In a true autocracy no Premier and no ministry must stand between the Emperor and his Empire. The idea of ministerial responsibility was trickery; it meant that the Emperor was to be shoved into the background, degraded into a mere rubber stamp—while the real power lay in the ministers', or rather the Premier's, hands. "Don't be a rubber stamp—be Cæsar!"—this was the burden of his advice.

It was lovely music in the ears of the youth of twenty-one. But there were others beside Kübeck who could play the Imperial tune just as well. The old man found personal intercourse with Francis Joseph delightful. He was dignified and yet perfectly natural—he was majesty incarnate, and at the same time a rosy-cheeked bashful young man who knew what he owed to age and experience. From the outset Kübeck conceived a genuine affection for the monarch who might have been his grandson. When he thanked him for his appointment to President of the Reichsrath, he asked the Emperor to tell him frankly whenever he was dissatisfied with him. "He promised this, and in return demanded that I too shall always tell him the truth without fear. My Emperor may depend on that." "There are great hopes in the splendid youth," he later writes in his diary. "May they mature favourably!" But there was something that worried

the veteran statesman. Francis Joseph was subject to moods. At one audience he was full of enthusiasm and understanding—open-hearted, gay, sympathetic. Next time he was silent and reserved—it was obvious that he held something back from him. "Oh my Emperor" exclaims the Baron, "may his good will and his earnest application protect this most attractive youth against the dangers that lurk like colossal shadows around him!"

Those shadows would, on closer inspection, bear a remarkable resemblance to the well-known silhouettes of the Premier and the Minister of Interior. The trouble was that Schwarzenberg, that hero of boudoir scandals, that burnt-out, unprincipled *roué*, still had the Emperor's full trust. He exercised a mysterious, a sinister, influence over the poor dear youth; the monarch's relapses into those fits of diffidence were entirely due to the Premier's clever cajolery. And Schwarzenberg was led by the nose by Herr Bach; and Herr Bach was led by one consideration, and one only: the worldly advancement of Herr Bach. A fine alliance: a shyster lawyer and an illiterate cavalry officer—unscrupulous slyness and arrogant ignorance!

Kübeck was disgusted with the baseness of those two expert intriguers. Bach, for instance, knew that the boy-Emperor set his heart on being strong, powerful and feared; and he flattered him by making him believe that he already was all that! Never would Kübeck condescend to such cheap lip-service. On the contrary, he was pointing out to the monarch the road to the attainments which Bach, faithless servant, tried to persuade him were already his.

At last, after many ups and downs in the Imperial favour, in June, 1851, Kübeck felt strong enough for a

decisive sally. In a long conversation with the Emperor he formally accused Schwarzenberg of tying the sovereign's hands by the proclamation of the March Constitution. Nor was the Premier's guilt alleviated by his present admission of a past mistake. He further charged that through the vicious fiction of ministerial responsibility the Cabinet usurped Imperial power, and at the same time shifted the odium for ministerial despotism upon the Crown. The continued existence of the Ministry, therefore, endangered Imperial authority.

Deeply impressed by the eloquence with which the President of the Reichsrath expressed ideas that for some time had been maturing in his own mind, the Emperor bade him to formulate his views in writing. Kübeck lost no time in obeying. In the memorandum which he presently submitted, he emphasized that he did not wish to reflect on the ministers' persons. They had shown courage and determination in suppressing the revolution. The system, not individuals, was at fault. The Constitution was untenable. Instead of breaking it piecemeal, why not revoke it once for all? The weal of the state should outweigh reluctance to acknowledge a past error. In a second paper Kübeck proposed that the principle of ministerial responsibility should be formally abolished, and that henceforth the ministers' only business should be execution of imperial ordinances. The implication was plain; the Emperor was urged to seize the reins of government, to degrade the ministers into superior clerks, and to instal the Reichsrath as the highest consultative body.

This, at last, was real talk! Never in his life had Francis Joseph met anybody who would express so brilliantly, forcefully, truly, his own theory of government. Why, the Emperor exclaimed, surely he owed

Schwarzenberg a good deal, but if the Premier did not consent to these proposals they would have to part. It was, however, only fair, he added, to notify the Premier before any action was taken.

By all the rules of the game Schwarzenberg now should have acknowledged defeat. But he did not even know that he was beaten, and improved the occasion into a strategic success. He declared that he agreed completely with Kübeck's proposals, and respectfully asked His Majesty to charge him with the details of abolishing ministerial responsibility and revoking the Constitution.

V

The President of the Reichsrath was invited to attend the Crown Council of August 17, 1851. The Emperor, who presided, read a declaration (it had been composed by Bach according to Schwarzenberg's instructions) commanding the Cabinet to submit the draft of a new basic law. He then added: "This is my will. The ministers may now decide whether they wish to continue in office."

The ministers were dumbfounded. The Imperial words left no room for doubt as to their real import. The new basic law was needed because the old one was to go overboard. In other words, a *coup d'état.* And this was the first they ever heard of it. For apart from Schwarzenberg and Bach only the Minister of Finance, Baron Philip Krauss, was initiated; and the others, of course, could not know even that. Moreover, the monarch's closing remarks made it clear that there was going to be no discussion. They were simply expected to announce their concurrence.

Schwarzenberg rose first. He spoke with soldierly

brevity. "My life belongs to my Emperor," he said. "I shall serve him unto the end." Bach was more elaborate, but said the same thing in effect. The hero of barricades even added, by way of supererogation, that not only was the step inevitable but the proposed method also was the best possible.

This, so far, was according to schedule. The next number was not included in the programme. In a voice trembling with emotion the Minister of Finance, old Baron Krauss, reminded the Emperor how during the October revolution, after the Government's flight, he alone had remained in rebel Vienna and at the risk of his life protected the Imperial treasury. He then had furnished sufficient proof of his loyalty. His life was still at the disposal of His Majesty. But he had sworn an oath to uphold the March Constitution; and as a good Catholic he could not reconcile his conscience with the projected course. If his Majesty persisted in his decision—well and good; there was nothing for him to do but to resign.

It was a novel experience for Francis Joseph to be told what he owed his conscience as a good Catholic. He was deeply shocked. Two of the other ministers, after a faint show of religious misgivings, deferred to the Imperial wish; the rest did not even hint at dissent. Anyway, what did it matter? He had stated his policy; they could take it or leave it.

With the exception of Philip Krauss they all took it. Two days after his twenty-first birthday—on August 20, 1851—Francis Joseph signed four decrees prepared by Kübeck. One of them abolished the doctrine of ministerial responsibility. Another provided that the ministers should prepare a report on the possibility of carrying out the Constitution, as the fiction of infeasible laws was to be dropped. The third and fourth specified details.

The Constitution was dead. But it still had to be buried. A commission was appointed to draw up the report as commanded. Kübeck was chairman; Bach and Krauss, as members, attempted here and there to mitigate the fury of reaction, but they were hopelessly outvoted. One after the other the achievements of the revolution were slaughtered; trial by jury, irremovability of judges, separation of judicial from administrative power, publicity of court procedure, the remnants of press freedom. Finally the principle of elected representation was abolished. The hands of the clock were set back by three years; it was as good as setting them back by three hundred.

The draft of the report was then submitted to the Emperor. He approved of the whole, with one change. He struck out the clause which confirmed the emancipation of the Jews, enacted in 1848. Francis Joseph's Catholic conscience, in which Philip Krauss' tirade still rankled, was assuaged.

Thus the draft became a bill. In a single sitting the Reichsrath passed it, and the bill became law. Then an unexpected hitch occurred. The new law still needed the Cabinet's approval to be put on the statute book. Without committing himself too far, Bach tried a little sabotage. A few weeks went by. The Emperor grew impatient. On December 2, 1851, came the *coup d'état* at Paris: the President of the Republic, Prince Louis Napoleon, rescinded the Constitution. Francis Joseph's professional pride, as it were, was roused. He really could not be outdone by a mere parvenu like Napoleon. He called a joint session of Cabinet and Reichsrath. It was a most solemn affair. The Emperor read the statute and asked if anybody had any objection. Nobody did.

On December 31, 1851, an Imperial rescript revoked

the Constitution proclaimed by another Imperial rescript a year and nine months earlier.

Accomplished facts always soothed the soul of Alexander Bach. He had done the humanly possible; further worry was useless; as well win with the winner. He began to discover the good points of autocracy. He made rapid progress. He said to Prince Khevenhüller: "Now we are on the right road." "*I* have never been on the wrong one," snapped that nobleman.

CHAPTER IX

RELEASE

I

To those who could read signs it was a bad portent that in September, 1851, the Prince Metternich returned to Vienna after an exile of three and a half years, spent in London and Brussels. Adversity never hinted to that ancient philosopher-statesman that he may have contributed to the catastrophe of 1848; it only confirmed his belief in the stupidity and wickedness of mankind. He thought he had acted superbly in the crisis; he relinquished power with a *beau geste* which tickled him all the more as he knew it to be a joke on his enemies; for his mind clearly reserved his ultimate purpose. "The last word has not yet been said, and it is I who will say it," he remarked as soon as he reached safety.

He saw with intense satisfaction how everywhere—in Vienna, France, Hungary, Lombardy, Rome, Naples, Germany—the revolutionists were running their wagon into the ditch. Of course—just what he had expected. What did that silly rabble know about statecraft? By Jove! he could have beaten them at their own game; he could have given them a lesson in conducting a revolution. "Had they consulted me," he wrote to his daughter, "I should have told them how to do things—but they did not, and I wash my hands of them."

The success of the counter-revolution was his personal triumph. "It is I who have conquered—what a pity that I could not be present," he said after Windischgraetz's entry into Vienna. But, while rejoicing over the return of autocracy, he disapproved both of Schwarzenberg's person and his methods. He regarded the Prince as too unscrupulous, and, what was worse, as an innovator. He shared—he partly inspired—the views of Windischgraetz and Kübeck. Besides, he nursed a personal grievance. Schwarzenberg's henchmen, very rudely, demanded accounting for the withdrawal, without voucher, of 21,000 florins from the Treasury, and secured the amount on his property pending settlement. This was absolutely disgraceful.

That his return followed closely Kübeck's victory in that fatal Crown Council of August was in itself a symbol. It had been the victory of the old despotism over the new. The first line of the state's defences was taken by the pre-March forces. More were to follow. For there was an essential difference between autocracy of the Metternichian, pre-1848 pattern and the new Schwarzenberg-Bach model. The former was patriarchal, easy-going, inept and inert; outside the police department it practised the doctrine of *laisser-faire;* it favoured feudal privilege, and never destroyed an historical institution or usage just because it was inefficient or asymmetric. The new tyranny was aggressive, tense and insatiable. It annexed new fields for government activity all the time; it was efficient; it was equalitarian, and even hostile to the nobility, because the nobility represented both sloth and exemption. This régime brooked no exemption; everybody, as the poet had said, was equally disfranchised. It was the difference between the France of Louis XVI and that of Napoleon; and, indeed, "Bonapartist" was

the term of opprobrium applied to the system of Schwarzenberg and Bach by its conservative critics. Kübeck used that expression, and so did Bismarck.

Metternich and Kübeck understood each other beautifully. They had, if not grown up, at least grown old together; together they now mourned, in the fashion of old men, over the passing of the good old times, and denounced in unison the wicked folly of the new generation.

> "My dearest friend," Metternich said to Kübeck, "what is this world coming to? If anybody had told us that this beautiful Empire shall be saved by a lawyer's clerk, a young chap who writes articles for the newspapers and has picked up some learning from books; by a bankrupt shopkeeper who narrowly escaped gaol; a governor who ran away from danger, and an immoral, flippant diplomat[1]—why, we should have thought the man was crazy; and yet these four are now regarded as our saviours."

Francis Joseph had assured Metternich that he would be delighted over his return. Now the Emperor called in person to welcome the venerable old Prince. All the Archdukes called, too, and all the ministers. Among the first who presented their compliments was the Minister of Interior. It was only three years and six months ago that Alexander Bach stood in the anteroom of the Chancellery waving a pistol and giving Metternich five minutes' grace. Now he wore his best suit and his best smile, and assured the Prince of his unfaltering devotion. Once more Bach's conduct registered, with a precision worthy

[1] Bach, Bruck, Stadion, Schwarzenberg. The Chancellor's references to the antecedents of these statesmen are malicious rather than accurate—more particularly in the case of Bruck and Stadion.

of the best barometer, the pressure of the political atmosphere.

The ex-leader of radicals had just passed through the ordeal of his life. When Schwarzenberg told him of Kübeck's plan to revoke the Constitution he was confronted with the final choice: either he had to break, absolutely and irretrievably, with his liberal past and embrace, without reservations, the cause of autocracy; or else, to sacrifice his career and return into the obscurity of a lawyer's practice. He was thirty-eight; in three years he had scaled heights attained by no other commoner in Austrian history save his enemy Kübeck. He had great achievements behind him; still greater ones beckoned ahead. He, more than any other single individual, was responsible for the transformation of Austria, in those three years, from a semi-oriental sluggish despotism into a modern bureaucracy. The conception may have been Stadion's; Schwarzenberg contributed the impetus; but all the colossal labour of organization, all the expert knowledge, all the craftsmanship, all the vast energy that went into minute detail,—all that was his. He was the ablest man in Austria with the exception, perhaps, of Bruck, and he knew it. He could tell himself: "I have succeeded where the Emperor Joseph had failed; I have unified the Austrian state by abolishing the antiquated historic boundaries; I unified Austrian society by abolishing the antiquated class boundaries of feudalism; I have created one government, one law, for all this multitude of races and peoples." And there was still much, very much work to be done, and no one to do it but himself.

His former comrades with whom he had planned and fought the revolution called him a renegade. But was

he one? Who had done more to consolidate the gains of March,—he, the liberator of serfs, he, who inflicted the death blow on feudal privilege, he, who codified equality before the law—or they, who so glibly and redundantly talked themselves from cafés into prisons? Who had done more for the Austrian peasant than Alexander Bach? He sought power and position—true; but, he asked himself, did he not apply his power for the benefit of the masses? He may have shed the outer trappings of liberalism; but was he not realizing its inner essence?

They called him a traitor, did they? Why, they were powerless, suspect, outcast; they could never render to the principles they vociferated about a penn'orth of real service. Who tried to save the lives of the Hungarian revolutionary generals? He, Alexander Bach. Who tried to stem the tide of reaction and save as much as possible of the March Constitution? He, Alexander Bach. Who overruled the silly prohibitions of the censor and enabled radical authors like Bauernfeld (who was among his bitterest critics) to produce their plays in the Burgtheater? He, Alexander Bach. No, his conscience was clear. Appearances may be against him—but he remained true to himself.

Considerations of the Empire's future, and his own, outweighed the counsel of vanity and fear. He snapped his fingers at the stigma with which his former friends smote him. Let them howl as much as they liked. He, Alexander Bach, was not to be swerved from the straight and narrow if upward path of duty. The dice were cast. He decided to remain in office and support Schwarzenberg to the end. And if there were *coups d'état* to be carried out—why, by Jove, *he* would carry them out himself, in *his* way, and salvage the remnants of reform.

His position was anything but comfortable. If his former comrades branded him a renegade, his new allies distrusted, hated, despised him. In the eyes of the feudal nobility he, the upstart, the liberator of serfs, the confiscator of estates, was *the* fiend. He was either sincere in his change of sides, in which case he was a traitor, and that was bad enough, or else—far more likely—he was not, and in that case he was a hypocrite and a secret communist, an enemy within the gates, and this was worse.

On every turn he was insulted and slandered. In the salons of aristocratic society they said that he was born a Jew—he, offspring of an immemorial race of German peasants, nephew of a village priest. When in 1852 Bismarck came to Vienna all his friends told him that the Empire was ruled by a Jewish clique headed by Bach. Meyendorff, the Russian ambassador, remarked to Kübeck: "My house is open to all gentlemen; but there are among the ministers a few who are no gentlemen; these I do not receive at all."

In May, 1851, the Czar Nicholas came to Olmütz to meet the Emperor of Austria. It was a gathering of extraordinary splendour; all the generals who had fought in the revolutionary wars of 1848–49 were there, with Field Marshal Radetzky, the Czar's special favourite, at their head. The Russian sovereign was in a most gracious mood, and showered favours on the Austrian dignitaries. Bach created a sensation at Court by appearing with the clean-shaven face and chin of the *ancien régime*. He knew how the Czar detested everything reminiscent of the revolution, and had sacrificed his beard which was the distinguishing mark of the forty-eighters. He now looked forward confidently to Nicholas' summons. The Czar left Olmütz without receiving him.

He had but one friend—a powerful one, though. It

was the Prince Schwarzenberg. The Premier, with his education acquired in a regiment of dragoons, with his total lack of book learning, possessed the instinctive knowledge of men which so often marks the great lord and born commander. He saw through Bach; he read the depths of his soul. And he saw how foolishly mistaken his high-born brethren were when they regarded Bach as a secret radical. This man a revolutionist? Schwarzenberg knew Bach hated the revolution as men hate an ugly disease of their youth. He knew that Bach's radical past was the best guaranty of his conservative present. Of all men, Bach could least afford excursions leftward. Schwarzenberg was a cynic; if he was free from scruples, he was also free from prejudice. He took Bach as he was, and appreciated him. He knew Bach was the cleverest man, the best organizer, the keenest lawyer, in the whole Empire. True, Bach had no character; but that made him all the more efficient as a thinking apparatus.

It was a wonderful co-operation and a wonderful friendship—of the order which in natural history is described as symbiosis. Bach supplied Schwarzenberg with that which the Prince lacked, a trained intellect, all-around expert knowledge. Schwarzenberg gave Bach, the outcast of all parties and classes, a sense of security in office, and the status of the avowed intimate of the greatest lord in the Empire. Perhaps his contempt for his own class also egged on the Prince—the feeling, "Damn you all—I'll show you!" He ostentatiously appeared with Bach on various public occasions. Bach was indispensable at the Prince's house; Schwarzenberg was unmarried, and his sister the Princess Mathilde, who presided over the household, was devoted to her brother's friend. At men's parties at the Chancellery, Schwarzenberg occupied one end of the table, Bach the other; he was called the hostess

of the Ballplatz. It was a friendship based on the full moral surrender of the intellectually superior party, for which the stronger character was truly grateful.

II

For the revocation of the Constitution Kübeck could thank his own tact and persistence. To this well-merited reward of his efforts good luck soon added a gift. On April 5, 1852, the Prince Schwarzenberg died unexpectedly.

In his youth he had emptied the cup of pleasure to the dregs, and in his manhood he had refilled it a few times, and emptied it again. Recklessness was the kernel of his character; he was extravagant in love as in politics, always willing to stake everything on a single card, always choosing the more dangerous of two alternative courses. He did not belong to the century in which he lived; but as an anachronism he harked back, not to the sensible and cool eighteenth century, but to the savage seventeenth.

In his old age he spared himself as little as he had in his youth. But now he gave the last drop of his vitality to his work. About the beginning of 1852 he developed heart trouble; his physician feared a collapse. His gaunt figure and pale, emaciated face made him look like a ghost. His heart convulsions recurred with growing frequency. In January the minister of Baden witnessed such an attack in the Premier's study. Simultaneously his eyesight began to fail. He was forbidden to read. For the first time in his life he was frightened. His physician reassured him; there was no danger of complete blindness; but the possibility of apoplexy was hinted. "That manner of death has my full approval," said the Prince.

Early on April 5 a lady who had asked him to her party that evening inquired if he would come. "Most certainly—unless I am dead," he joked. With great care he

selected a bouquet of flowers destined for a beautiful Polish woman with whom he was carrying on a flirtation and whom he expected to meet at the ball. He worked all day, and late in the afternoon attended a cabinet meeting. As he arrived home to dress he was prostrated by a stroke. Bach was sent for, and the Prince expired in the arms of his friend.

His enemies—and no man counted more—rejoiced on all sides. For once the liberals whom he had oppressed and persecuted, and the feudal nobles whom he had insulted and shoved into the background, feasted together. Abroad, too, the passing of the despot was hailed with joy. He, the hangman of Italian, Viennese and Hungarian martyrs of freedom, the champion of autocracy, the bully of the weak, had been the symbol of all that which made Austria the butt of the hatred of nations. Abroad, too, his enemies were to be found among conservatives as well as among liberals. Queen Victoria regarded him as a lunatic, and wrote to Uncle Leopold that Nicholas (the Czar) had called him "Lord Palmerston in a white uniform." Which was about the worst that could be said of anybody as far as Queen Victoria was concerned. Leopold thought that the leaders of Austria were all drunk, but he hoped that they soon would come to their senses.

But then, England had always been Schwarzenberg's *bête noir*. His aversion to all things English was partly due to his political creed. He saw in England the fountainhead and the bulwark of everything that he hated and despised: parliamentarism, democracy, liberalism, humanitarianism. He detested the English for their constitution, and also for their cant. At least some of this antipathy may have been simply the bitter taste which the Ellenborough scandal had left in his

mouth. At any event, and for whatever reason, he insulted the British whenever he saw a chance. Thus, while he despatched a special embassy to all major courts to announce Francis Joseph's accession, he sent no such embassy to London. Owing to this omission, as well as to the enthusiasm with which British public opinion embraced the cause of Italy and Hungary, official relations between Vienna and London were strained throughout Schwarzenberg's term of office, and they were not improved by the timely support given by Lord Palmerston to the Hungarian political refugees. The statesman whom the Czar had described as Palmerston's equivalent in an Austrian uniform was constantly at loggerheads with his English counterpart, and the personalities exchanged were sometimes quite acrid. Now that his enemy had passed away the British statesman paid chivalrous tribute to his courage and patriotism in an address to Parliament.

A small but not unimportant group of Austrian patriots bewailed the premature death of the statesman who had guided the Austrian Empire to new heights of power and prestige. Among these sincere mourners was the young Emperor. Schwarzenberg's sway which in the time of the Hungarian war and the Prussian crisis had rendered the young monarch impervious to any other influence may in the last few months have been somewhat perturbed by Kübeck's ingenious and unrelenting tactics; but the Prince's death blotted out these late shadows, and the saviour of throne and empire, the conqueror of revolt, the chastiser of Prussia, held Francis Joseph once more bound by the spell of his powerful and fascinating personality. No successor was ever to exercise the same charm. Did the Emperor, as the years went by, realize that by sowing a crop of hatred all around, and by setting

a pace to Austrian policy which neither the Empire's resources nor the capacities of its governors could maintain, Schwarzenberg had in reality weakened the state which his glittering successes seemed to fortify? Hardly. Francis Joseph saw the immediate, the palpable, result, and he was impressed, overawed, enthralled. Years later he remarked wistfully that Schwarzenberg was the best minister he had ever had.

III

The task of the moment was to supplement the loss. At the Foreign Office the deceased had virtually designated his successor. He had selected the late Ambassador to St. Petersburg, Count Buol-Schauenstein, to act as his lieutenant during the vacation, long overdue, upon which he now entered through the unexpected trapdoor of the grave. The Count now was summoned to supplant his chief permanently.

That for the post of Premier Schwarzenberg had suggested his faithful Bach was hinted by the Emperor's conduct. When the news of the Prince's death was broken to him Francis Joseph hurried to the Ballplatz. He spent some time kneeling at the deathbed, absorbed in prayer. Then, returning to the palace, he summoned Kübeck. The ancient Baron arrived out of breath with haste and excitement. He was almost knocked down by the fervour of Francis Joseph's address.

"Do you think that I ought to appoint Bach Premier definitely or only provisionally?" queried the monarch.

It does not happen often, outside of daydreams, that one's worst enemy is thus presented as a convenient target for a broadside. The chance of a lifetime! Yet, seasoned courtier though he was, passion, not calculation,

directed Kübeck's answer. He replied with such vehemence that Bach must not be appointed under any circumstances, that the Emperor, taken aback, remarked:

"I see Bach is generally hated, isn't he?"

"'Hated' is perhaps not the right word, your Majesty," countered Kübeck. "It is worse than that. Against mere hatred your Majesty's favour would afford ample protection. But not even your Majesty's good will can shield Bach against the contempt in which his character is held."

Never before had Francis Joseph been spoken to thus. He was so impressed that he offered the Premiership to Kübeck.

That moment was Kübeck's test. He could at last prove that by fighting Schwarzenberg and Bach he had fought for a principle, not for personal preferment. He declined the honour with thanks, and proposed that the Emperor should appoint no Premier at all, but should himself decide all business after listening to the heads of departments. In other words, he suggested return to the system of State Conferences which had prevailed under the Emperor Francis.

If Kübeck thought that he had done for Bach he was mistaken. The Minister of Interior still had a powerful reserve. For some months he had assiduously wooed the Archduchess Sophie. He knew that the short cut to the favour of the Emperor's mother led through a church door. Bach, the revolutionary radical of 1848, completed by 1852 his metamorphosis into a conservative pietist. It was part of his fate that though in the pursuit of his worldly ends he was capable of any inconsistency, yet there was always in his conversions just a trace of sincerity, not enough to redeem them, but enough to cause the charges of hypocrisy which were

heaped upon him to smart all the more with the sting of subjective injustice. There could be no doubt that he threw himself on the bosom of the Church in search of patronage. Yet his flight to religion was not all lip service and base calculation. He had grown up in an intensely Catholic milieu; the happiest memories of his youth recalled holidays spent in the parsonage of his uncle, the village priest at Gars, later dean of Krems. And his erstwhile friend the poet Bauernfeld, who became one of his savagest enemies, testifies that an element of mysticism was always present in his makeup. Was it that Bach, unconsciously arming for any emergency, had developed little reservoirs of assorted sentiment which his intellect could tap for self-justification at need? Be that as it may—his religious awakening was complete. He was observed every day kneeling at one of the altars in the church which adjoined the Department of Interior. Officers from the neighbouring War Office invited friends from the provinces to watch that sight. And a petitioner was warned in his antechamber by a cynic: "Be careful—don't forget, every inch a Bishop!"

Sophie, clear-headed as ever, free from prejudice like Schwarzenberg himself, must have realized that Bach was the fittest instrument of that safe and unquestioned autocracy for which she strove. Her deep-rooted antagonism to Metternich—the hatred of the thoroughly practical for the ideologue, and of the mother for the politician who had opposed the elevation of her son—may have drawn her toward the man whom she knew Metternich detested more than the reddest revolutionist. Once more she tipped the scales in Bach's favour. When the Minister of Interior remarked to Francis Joseph, "I have lost my only friend," the Emperor replied, "You forget me."

Within a few days Bach could discount that pledge of Imperial friendship. The decree appointing him Premier was duly drawn up and signed by the sovereign, and then handed over to the Adjutant-General, Count Grünne, for expedition. Grünne belonged to the feudal-military clique which was out for Bach's scalp. He showed the decree to Kübeck. Kübeck alarmed Metternich. There was a stampede in the pre-March camp. That appointment must be squashed at any price.

Just how it was done has never been cleared up. But one week after Schwarzenberg's death the Official Gazette published an Imperial rescript abolishing the Council of Ministers, and restoring the State Conference over which the Emperor himself was to preside. All business was to be relayed from the Departments, through the private cabinet of the Emperor, to the latter's hands, and the Emperor was to dispose after hearing the Minister in charge.

Thus the victory of the pre-March régime over revolution, complete in fact on December 31, 1851, was on April 12, 1852, complete in name as well. It was not the victory of the first half of the nineteenth century over the second; it was the conquest of the nineteenth century by the eighteenth. For the two men who contrived that conquest—Kübeck and Metternich—had both been born before the Bastille fell. The State Conference had been the governmental method of Maria Theresa and Frederick of Prussia. Indeed, the very essence of the State Conference system was that there was no State Conference—only state conferences, now and then, whenever the monarch felt like it. As under the Emperor Francis, the vital affairs of the Empire were to be decided henceforth, not by the Emperor and Ministers in council, but by the Emperor himself, who might or might not consult the

Minister in charge, and might or might not act upon the Minister's suggestion.

Bach was crushed. But the men who had laid him low—among the tribe of head-hunters the Count Grünne was feasted as a mighty head-hunter before the Lord—were not above kicking a prostrate enemy. Presently another rescript transferred the supreme police authority from the Minister of Interior to a newly created Police Department headed by an Imperial Chief of Police. For over a year Schwarzenberg had warded off this transfer, feverishly advocated by the anti-Bach coterie; a few days after the Prince's death the blow fell.

Lest there be any misapprehension as to the meaning of the measure, one of Bach's grimmest enemies, Lieutenant-General Baron John Kempen, Inspector-General of the Gendarmerie, was appointed to the new post. He obtained the rank of a minister and a seat on the State Conference.

Much more than a point of prestige was involved here for Bach. He had turned his back on democracy; he honestly—as far as he could be honest—upheld autocracy now. But he remained a man of law. He always did his best to defend legal methods against arbitrary ones; he fought the state of siege; he tried to save the civil service from complete militarization. The organization of the new Police Department, he knew only too well, meant not a co-ordination, but a superimposition. The entire machinery of interior administration was to be topped over by the military; and Kempen was one of the worst exponents of the *soldatesca*.

General Kempen detested Bach. He saw in him, not even a renegade, but a bogus renegade; a disguised anarchist, still entangled in his criminal past, capable of new treachery at any moment. A special squad of

the Police Department was detailed to watch the Minister of Interior. Bach was shadowed in the streets and spied upon at home, and a record was kept of all his doings. Of course he knew all about it, and bore this humiliation with the bland patience which was one of his strongest assets.

Fate conspired to make his life hell. About this time the Czar Nicholas came to Vienna to visit his Imperial brother. At Court, in society, there was much wonderment whether the mighty ruler would repeat the insult of Olmütz and refuse to see Bach. This time the Czar did not go quite so far, and received the Minister of Interior; only by the time the reception was over that wretched statesman wished he hadn't. The Russian Emperor told Bach it was a pity that a Minister of Interior knew nothing about the true situation in the Empire, and advised him to travel around in the provinces. This was the Czar's way of punishing the newfangled—and anti-Slav—policy of centralization and its chief exponent. As Bach referred to the difficulties of governing an Empire like Austria, the Czar brusquely interrupted him: "Of course, if a minister has behaved badly in his youth, he will lack the necessary courage later on."

Kübeck, on the other hand, was smothered by Imperial Russian favour. At the gala dinner at Court Nicholas had a long and hearty talk with the President of the Reichsrath. At the same dinner he cut Bach. Later, at an audience, he said to Kübeck: "You have achieved a great piece of work, and a still more difficult one is ahead of you." On leaving Vienna he bestowed the Order of St. Andrew on the Emperor's brothers and on Kübeck—no one else.

This violent partisanship, however, was too much of a

good thing. It rather smacked of interference with the internal affairs of Austria. Even some of the Bach-baiters admitted that a Minister of the Emperor must not be treated like a doormat, and Kübeck's enemies—he had quite a few, too—inquired if the President of the Reichsrath was a Russian, and not an Austrian, official. For once Bach basked in martyrdom.

IV

On April 14, 1852, the new State Conference met for the first time. The Emperor presided, and read an elaborate message laying down the principles which would henceforth be adhered to. The rescript of December 3, 1851—the one revoking the Constitution—was to be the basis of government. "His Majesty," concludes the official record, "further declared that the post of Prime Minister, after the recent, most regrettable vacancy, was not to be filled, but that the supreme control of affairs will be immediately concentrated in his all-highest hands."

It was Francis Joseph's declaration of independence. Now, at last, he had really come of age. For the first time, he could be himself—he was Cæsar, he was *αὐτοκράτωρ*. Schwarzenberg was dead. He had been his best minister; he had ruled the Empire with an iron hand—but had he not ruled the Emperor, too, with an iron will? He had been a strong and violent old man; when he advised it was not easy to say No.

And with the fading of the image of the fatherly mentor there loomed, bigger and darker than ever, the shadow of the Grandfather. Francis Joseph gained control of his self only to surrender it to the god of his childhood. The voice that read that declaration was the voice of the twenty-two year old one; but the hand that held the

manuscript was the ghastly hand of an old man seventeen years dead—the hand that once stroked a baby astride an old man's knee. The Emperor Francis rose from the dead and conquered the Empire which in his lifetime he had all but lost. His reign was to spread like a deadly pall over the reign of his grandson. Everything, everything, that seemed dead had now come to life; autocracy by divine right, the state conferences, decisions in the privacy of the Imperial study, the Emperor umpiring in the fight of antagonistic ministers. As once Metternich and Kolowrat, so now Kübeck and Bach grappled with each other for the supreme power, denouncing, intriguing, backbiting, spying on each other. There was the omnipotent Police Department—only Sedlnitzky now was called Kempen. And there was Metternich. Himself—not a counterpart. With Francis his alter ego, all but literally dead, had arisen. The imperishable Chancellor conquered at last, as he had said he would. Francis Joseph assured him that he would be consulted on all important issues of foreign policy. So potent was the old man's resurgent spirit that it affected even Schwarzenberg; for the Premier had despatched a note to Berlin demanding that the Prussian Constitution should be revoked. This was one hundred per cent. Metternich—the Holy Alliance at its best.

Francis Joseph was happy. He was Cæsar. He not only reigned; he also governed his Empire. It was as it should be. There was peace in Austria; and over that peace, which was the peace of a graveyard, presided a ghost.

CHAPTER X

THE WAVERER

I

The first act of government whereby Francis Joseph asserted his newly-gained independence was a replica of his grandfather's *début* as a ruler. He too, like Francis, set up a Supreme Police Board as a separate Ministry. Apart from kindred temperamental traits, both grandson and sire were impelled by wisdom boiled down from a recent scare. Both attributed revolution to the moral depravity of the masses. Both concluded that its best preventive was an efficient and ruthless police. With that groping delicious sense of familiarity which sometimes struggles to identify a sudden situation as one of a blurred past, Francis Joseph awoke to a new view of his task, a view which he found at once tremendously satisfying and instructive. His predicament was the same as his grandfather's. What could he do but to follow His example—to act and to be just like Him?

The emergency, indeed, was analogous; but there was an important difference. Francis Joseph may have enjoyed the consciousness that by a flash of his will he set the hands of the clock back by sixty years. In his eagerness he might well have overlooked the detail that it was a new clock. The estate of which the Police Minister of 1852 became chief steward was not the estate

of 1792. The old despotism lorded it over a variety of traditional forms, all based on feudal privilege; it was arbitrary at the centre, but it left the ancient organic growths undisturbed on the peripheries. The new dispensation destroyed these growths and substituted standard machinery. Between the patriarchalism of Francis and the paternalism of Francis Joseph rose the Great Divide of 1848. The awakening of peoples awakened the governors. The old system merely defended itself; the new took the offensive. It was the difference between Bourbon and Bonapartist France.

The fundamental note of the Franciscan régime had been distrust. But it had been, comparatively speaking, an innocent, unsophisticated distrust. The distrust which pervaded the system of Francis Joseph was exasperated by the disillusionment of 1848. Under the grandfather at least government officials had been safe from the attentions of the police—which was the reason why a large number of liberals sought refuge in the civil service, tempering its harshness to some degree. But now the Minister of Interior himself, the *spiritus rector* of the new era, the intellectual handle of the will to despotism, became a docket number in the records of the secret police. The standing army of soldiers, the sitting army of bureaucrats, the kneeling army of priests, and the sneaking army of informers still composed the garrison of the gaol in which he had imprisoned the peoples of Austria; but now he, the prison builder, obtained a taste of what being a prisoner felt like.

The new Chief Warden to whom the Emperor entrusted the safekeeping of the penal institution called Austria, the Lieutenant-General John Kempen, rewarded for his services with a barony, was a policeman born and bred—exact and diligent in the performance of his duties,

also brutal and unscrupulous, unhampered by any trace of culture, ruthless toward those whom he regarded as the enemies of the state. His standards as to who was an "enemy of the state" were comprehensive if vague; such enemies ranked from the Minister of Interior down to anybody who read books or could be suspected of holding political opinions. His vigilance may be best gauged statistically. In 1852 the number of prosecuted political offences was 1039—a handsome figure. By 1854 it rose to 3693. Even to a conservative Prussian observer, accustomed to the notorious severity of the Berlin police, Kempen's system suggested Russia.

The Minister of Police made a specialty of supervising the bureaucracy. He had reason to believe that he had been put into office to keep tab on that secret radical the Minister of Interior. Acting on the principle, "Like master, like servants," Kempen ordered his agents to watch every office holder in the realm as closely as possible. The result was that while hosts of spies drew pay from the treasury for sending in reams after reams of useless reports, government officials had to spend a good deal of their time in clearing themselves of preposterous accusations.

Not even the clergy, always a pampered favourite of the Austrian government, were spared. The Archbishop of Vienna happened to remark in Kempen's presence that a number of gendarmerie officers were living in concubinage. The Minister of Police retorted coolly that His Eminence had better watch his priests and their cooks. A few days later the Cardinal was supplied with an elaborate list giving names and addresses of the lady friends of the canons of St. Stephen's.

Herein lay another significant difference between the old tyranny and the new. The police of the Metter-

nichian system had had a sense of humour. Count Sedlnitzky, Metternich's celebrated "poodle," understood that a people that was having a good time was not apt to waste it in plotting against the government. Under his régime the Vienna police kept a record of bachelors who had no mistresses and did not habitually frequent wineshops. Within limits, even bantering against the sacrosanct "system" was tolerated as a vent. The Emperor Francis was a shrewd psychologist. "Look here, Count," he once said to the Chief of Police, "when the Viennese stop making bad jokes about me and my government you had better report it at once—then the thing begins to be unsafe." All this was ancient counsel of statesmanship. The first of Cæsars knew all about it:

> Let me have men about me that are fat,
> Sleek-headed men, and such as sleep o' nights;
> Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look;
> He thinks too much; such men are dangerous.

Wisdom such as this was utterly alien to Kempen's mentality. His gendarmerie sergeant's brain regarded every aberration from what he considered to be the norm as a criminal offence against the safety of the state. Thus public morals became one of the principal concerns of the police. Kempen's lieutenant, the chief of the Vienna police, Weiss von Starkenfels, was, moreover, an arch clerical and bigot who let his frustrated cravings run amok under the cloak of an avenger of obscenity. One of his ordinances provided for the arrest of all females found after dark in the streets "without adequate escort." Another feature of his vice crusade was an attempt to stamp out "wild" marriages. A large number of couples, perfectly respectable in every way but disqualified to marry under some provision or other of the

prevailing canonic law, were separated by brute force, and hundreds of children lost their homes.

The tidal wave of *kaiserlich königlich* uplift swamped the Bourse next. The Minister of Police conceived the brilliant idea of stabilizing the exchange rate of Austrian currency and the quotation of state bonds by the simple expedient of locking up the bears. Unfortunately, what with the wild adventures of the Foreign Office and the hopeless mess at the Treasury, the examples thus constituted did not, greatly to the puzzlement of the valiant Lieutenant-General, stop the tobogganing of paper money. Thereupon Kempen lost his temper and threatened to close down the Bourse altogether. "Very well," remarked a leading financier, "your Excellency proposes to smash the barometer in order to improve the weather."

It was, however, in the political field that the new White Terror realized hitherto unattained possibilities. The police abolished the last vestiges of public safety, and called this activity extinguishing the embers of revolution. Said embers included the broad-brimmed soft felt hats known as Calabrese, the full beards, and the black-red-gold cockades and scarves of the republicans of '48. Wherever now, in the whirl of Vienna streets, one of these harmless survivals of the revolution made its appearance, uniformed policemen and plain clothes agents swooped down on it like vultures on a carcass, and then and there horrible examples were constituted. The forbidden haberdashery was confiscated, the disloyal beards were shorn and their sites were shaved then and there.

These tonsorial antics, to be sure, represented the grotesque side of a very serious business. For one thing, Kempen was absolute master of the press. Bach had struggled desperately to retain censorship affairs under his own jurisdiction. The Emperor, however, decided the

issue in Kempen's favour, and the general of gendarmerie became the supreme spiritual dictator of Austria. Printers and booksellers had to apply to him for licenses which could be withdrawn at will. The form of newspaper control was particularly grievous. Proofs had to be submitted to the police which blue-pencilled objectionable passages. The editor was not obliged by law to omit the marked paragraphs; but if he printed them he was fined and sent to gaol. By this method one liberal journal after the other was harassed out of existence.

Foreign newspapers, save for a few semi-official and ultramontane sheets, as well as most books printed abroad, were banned *en bloc*. Thus the grandson restored the spiritual Chinese wall with which the grandfather had surrounded his Empire. It was a, from his own point of view, sound instinct that led Francis Joseph, who since the evening of December 1, 1848, had hardly looked at a single book, to make war on the letterpress: his instinct of self-preservation which whispered to him that ideas were his most dangerous enemy.

In the case of foreign journals one notable exception was made. There was a certain coffee house at Vienna, the Café Grünsteidl, where all the prohibited periodicals were on file, ostensibly for the convenience of the public. In reality this was a labour-saving device. Secret service operatives, snugly sipping their coffee in the corners, could note down in comfort the names of strangers and greenhorns who, unaware of the trap, regaled themselves on the tabooed prints.

While the mouthpieces of the government maintained that all these repressive measures were needed to keep the spirit of rebellion in check, the truth was that they goaded the masses out of the passivity of despair which after the collapse of the democratic movement had gripped

the souls of all. Discontent was not crushed; it was only driven underground. Among the undergraduates of the University of Vienna a former colonel of the Hungarian republican army, May by name, organized a plot. It was discovered, and one of his associates, a brilliant young engineer, Cæsar von Bezard, was sentenced to death and hanged. Colonel May himself, tormented by the obsession that by talking in his sleep he might give away his friends, decided to commit suicide, and carried out his plan with unmatched heroism. Lighting a straw which he had pulled out of his mattress by the flame of an oil lamp just outside the grating on his cell door, he set fire to his bed. In order to stifle his cries he stuffed his handkerchief into his mouth. He was discovered in the morning burnt to an unrecognizable clump but still alive; when the gag was removed from his mouth his shrieks nearly drove the other prisoners out of their minds. He died two days later amidst unspeakable pains.

Once more as under Francis the prisons overflowed with political criminals, justifying the young Emperor's assumption about the intrinsic wickedness of the people. No, one could do nothing with the rabble except rule it by force. The more kindly they were treated the worse they behaved. General Prince Khevenhüller—the same who had snubbed Bach so effectually—aptly expressed the spirit of the Government when, on being transferred from Prague to Lemberg as governor of Galicia, he exclaimed: "Splendid province this—next to Hungary, the finest, for here not only the capital is under martial law, as in Bohemia, but the whole damned show."

II

The nature of the relations that during the first four years of his reign prevailed between Francis Joseph and

his peoples is suggested, among other evidence, by the authentic fact that only once in that entire period did the Viennese street crowd, the most loyal and devoted crowd in the world, the same that during the May revolution of 1848 had decorated its barricades with the Emperor's portraits, offer him a spontaneous cheer. This happened in the spring of 1851, in the course of the Czar Nicholas's visit to the Austrian capital. One day in the main avenue of the Prater the horse of a Russian aide, frightened by the carriage-and-six in which the Czaritsa and the Archduchess Sophie were riding, ran away toward a group of women and children. A catastrophe seemed inevitable when suddenly the runaway collided with a splendid Arab cantering down the avenue. The impact was so terrific that it would have unsaddled the heaviest cuirassier. Yet the light Hungarian Hussar who rode the Arab hardly swayed in his seat—with a lightning movement he grasped the wild steed by the bridle and pulled him up on the side of his mount so vigorously that the powerful animal trembled like an aspen branch. The horror-stricken stillness with which the festive throng watched the scene gave way to thundering cheers as they recognized in the young Hussar officer the Emperor himself.

This incident, however, was the exception which by its very record emphasized the rule. Ordinarily, when Francis Joseph, escorted by his suite, rode out in his capital, his approach hushed all noise in the street, and the passers-by who lined up along the sidewalks stared at the glittering cavalcade in a stony motionless silence more eloquent than the bitterest of execrations. The Emperor, wearing the uniform of a colonel of lancers or dragoons, usually rode in front, gay of mien, his steel-blue eyes looking away over the heads of his subjects as indifferently

as if they had been a field of poppies. What a change since the days of the good Ferdinand whose beaming face of a decayed baby never, not even in the heyday of revolutionary fervour, failed to elicit a rousing cheer from the populace! Sometimes a few secret service agents, distributed among the crowd, ventured a pitiful sham of an ovation, in which nobody else joined—the burghers remained wrapped in grim silence, hissing, at most, oaths at the gendarmes whose carbine butts buffeted their ribs or knocked their hats into the gutter. There is a scene on record when a gorgeous staff officer, jumping away from the suite, rode his charger into the mute array of spectators and constituted another of the well known examples by mercilessly beating the handiest citizen with the flat of his sabre until the victim, a poor idiotic youth who understood nothing of the proceedings, yelled with pain. The hero who thus vindicated the power and glory of the sovereign was identified by the onlookers as His Majesty's Adjutant-General, Count Grünne.

On February 18, 1853—a bright winter day, very propitious for the open-air flogging of women then *en vogue* in the Kingdom of Lombardy—the Emperor was taking a walk on the bastion when, at about half past noon, a man rushed up from behind and stabbed him in the neck. The heavy gold lace on the uniform collar deflected the dagger, and the wound was but slight. The Emperor's aide, Count O'Donnell, and a passer-by, the worthy master butcher Etterich, seized the assailant, and Francis Joseph, faint but erect, walked home to the Hofburg. "It's all right," he smilingly reassured his distressed mother, "now I am a casualty, too, like my soldiers." He referred to the men who a few days earlier had been killed in the rebellion at Milan.

The would-be assassin turned out to be a Hungarian, Libényi by name, bent on avenging his downtrodden country. He said he had no accomplices, and as actually none could be traced by the most strenuous search, he went to the gallows by himself a week later.

It was decided to erect a public memorial of the Emperor's happy escape. The appeal for funds issued by his brother the Archduke Ferdinand Max met with a generous response, especially on the part of the upper classes, and from the proceeds of the subscription the Votivkirche, a stately specimen of nineteenth century Gothic, was built on the spot where Libényi's dagger had struck the monarch. This monument of officially nurtured gratitude is, however, not the only reminder of the event. Another souvenir has been handed down —a little ditty in the rich Viennese dialect, very popular in the fifties, but one sung only in the ascertained absence of police informers.

> Auf der Simmeringer Had'
> Hat's an Schneider verwaht,
> 's g' schiecht eahm scho' recht,
> Warum sticht er so schlecht?[1]

While thus in the salons of the nobility and the front parlours of the prosperous bourgeoisie the subscription lists of the Memorial Church provided an opportunity for the *gutgesinnt* crowd to express the degree of their loyalty in the language of hard cash, in the haunts of undergraduates and the faubourgs of workmen the wicked deplored, not Libényi's intention, but his deficient technique. It is, however, unlikely that Francis Joseph ever

[1] In English: "On Simmering Heath the storm blew away a tailor. Serves him right, why did he stab so clumsily?" Libényi was a tailor by trade; he was hanged at Simmering, the Tyburn of Vienna.

heard that ballad sung. He granted a small annuity to Libényi's old mother who had lost her only support; while his own, the Archduchess Sophie, publicly prayed for the assassin's poor soul in the chapel of the Hofburg. In three weeks the Emperor could leave his bed; by the end of April, just about two months after the attempt, he attended shooting parties.

III

The assault on the Emperor's life had one gratifying result. It improved the relations, for years anything but cordial, between the Hofburg and the Court of St. James. Throughout the half century following the Congress of Vienna British public opinion was consistently and bitterly anti-Austrian. All enemies of the Habsburg Empire, whether Hungarian, Polish, Italian, or German liberal, would find ready sympathies in England, and in Lord Palmerston Great Britain possessed an exceptionally tough-lived Foreign Minister who found a malicious pleasure in administering a whack to Austria whenever he saw his chance. He fought a long-distance diplomatic duel with Schwarzenberg, and some of his official acts were calculated to insult Francis Joseph in person. When the Austrian Government demanded from the Porte the extradition of Kossuth and his fellow-refugees Palmerston sent a fleet to Constantinople to protect them. In the autumn of 1850 General Haynau, notorious as the flogger of women in Italy and the executioner of the Hungarian generals, then on a visit to London, was thrashed terribly by the clerks and draymen in Barclay and Perkins' brewery. The Austrian ambassador demanded an apology. Palmerston, with purposely ill-concealed glee, expressed his regrets but added that the General had

The Emperor Francis Joseph After the Attempt on His Life

The Imperial Villa at Ischl

"evinced a want of propriety in coming to England" at this moment. A year later Kossuth arrived in London, and was greeted like a conqueror. Palmerston announced a dinner in his honour, and when the Prime Minister, Lord John Russell, warned him that this would be resented as a direct affront by the Austrian Government, the Foreign Secretary replied that there was a limit to everything, and he would not allow anyone to prescribe for him whom he might receive at his house and whom he might not. Hard pressed by the entire Cabinet, the redoubtable old man waived his dinner party, but took his revenge by placing his villa at Kossuth's disposal.

A few weeks later a deputation of Radicals waited on him at the Foreign Office and presented an address in which the Emperors of Austria and Russia were described as "odious and detestable assassins and merciless tyrants and despots," and thanks were expressed for the Foreign Secretary's succour rendered to the champions of liberty. Palmerston, while mildly deprecating the strong words, declared that he felt "extremely flattered" and "highly gratified." Lord John tore his hair in despair, but the British public wildly applauded its favourite.

In all these escapades Lord Firebrand may have had the British people behind him, but he surely did not have the British Queen. Although in her position it would have been difficult for her to say so, Victoria probably shared the sentiment of the high-born Austrian lady who declared that no gallows were too high for Palmerston. She could never forgive him the humiliation she had been subjected to on the occasion of Francis Joseph's accession, when the Prince Schwarzenberg only sent her a letter in lieu of a special embassy. It was Palmerston who had brought this upon her head. And she detested his ideas, too, and his impudent independence in despatching vital

notes without submitting them to her at first. More particularly in all the questions pertaining to the internal difficulties of Austria her sentiments were desperately at odds with those of her Foreign Secretary—as well as of the vast majority of her subjects. Victoria was a Legitimist. She believed in the God-ordained permanency of the relations between sovereign and people; she believed, in her heart of hearts, in divine right and absolute power; and, what with the restraints imposed upon her by the British Constitution, it was far easier for her to allow her legitimist and absolutist sympathies free play in her private feelings toward Austria than in her public acts toward Britain. She worried poor Lord John Russell out of his wits by her complaints over Palmerston's conduct, and her demands for reparation. She thought that the popular enthusiasm for Kossuth and Mazzini were, like the attack on General Haynau, outbursts of the mob spirit, and she would have agreed with Francis Joseph that the national movement in Italy and Hungary was nothing but the expression of the "inherent rawness and bad breeding" of the masses. She was bitterly opposed to Palmerston's policy in supporting the cause of united Italy, and held that it was "quite immoral, with Ireland quivering in our grasp and ready to throw off her allegiance at any moment, to attempt to force Austria to give up her lawful possessions."

The candid logic of this argument may have been more Albertian than Victorian. The fact remains that, though the Queen's emphatic disapproval of Lord Palmerston's anti-Austrian alarums and excursions could not in the long run be kept secret from Vienna, relations between the two courts continued in a chilly atmosphere. The first thaw came with the Great Exhibition of 1851.

Victoria exulted in the magnificent creation of her beloved Albert, and Francis Joseph, who thought he was merely performing a routine act of courtesy, chanced upon the key to her heart by despatching, by special envoy, an assortment of Austrian products. He was rewarded with a letter written by Victoria's own hand—a letter fairly throbbing with happiness which was impaired only by the regret "to have been the only sovereign to enjoy this scene [of opening the Exhibition], at once impressive and touching the heart."

But the event which broke down barriers and turned more or less formal exchanges into genuine friendly intercourse was Libényi's attempt on the Emperor's life. The news profoundly stirred Victoria. Had she not been herself the victim, to date, of five similar attacks? A benevolent Providence had watched over her and saved her from harm—Providence and the curious psychological twist which caused the inane youths to load their pistols with nothing more murderous than strips of newspaper. Yet, though she had never been hit, she knew what being shot at felt like; and that her letter of sympathy to Francis Joseph was an affair, not of etiquette, but of the heart, was attested by an indisputable, a glowing, fact: the letter was written not only in the Queen's own hand, but, unlike the previous missives, in her own language, their common language—German.

> "I know, alas! from repeated personal experience what painful impression is left behind by seeing the trust so willingly placed in all, even the smallest, of those around us, thus suddenly broken. Only the healing influence of time can obliterate this impression, supported by the expressions of sympathy and affection received on these sad events."

One of those who had broken the Emperor's trust was overtaken by retribution quickly enough—and he not the smallest. The Chief of the Vienna police, Weiss von Starkenfels, woke up one morning to find himself sacked. He may or may not have been surprised by the fact; he must have been giddied by the motivation. He was dismissed, not because his measures had failed to protect the sovereign, but—so the semi-official *Frankfurter Volkszeitung* explained—because Libényi's deed had been provoked by his own ultra-severe methods which he kept on pursuing, though he "ought to have realized, by many symptoms, that the highest circles would have welcomed a policy of relenting." The poor fellow who had thought he was being kept as a bloodhound now saw himself condemned because he was not a lamb! Verily, he must have felt that this was a topsy-turvy, unreasonable world—unless he remembered the fate of others who before him had served their Emperor faithfully and were sacrificed for the blunders of their masters. He was simply the latest addition to the herd of scapegoats browsing ingratitude along the path of Habsburg.

IV

Metternich had scoffed that the death of Schwarzenberg would leave the substance of Austrian policy unchanged, while it would greatly improve its manners. For once this otherwise so successful prophet guessed wrong. The manners remained just as bad as they had been, but the substance deteriorated. Schwarzenberg may have been brutal and cynical, but he at least knew what he wanted. He had a granite will; he had style. His successor merely had a brazen front and stylish clothes.

The Count Carl Ferdinand von Buol-Schauenstein was the son of an Austrian diplomat of Swiss origin. Born in

1797, he held under Metternich ministerial appointments to minor courts—Karlsruhe, Stuttgart, Turin. The old Chancellor seemed to think that that was all he was good for. It was Schwarzenberg who "discovered" him in his comparative obscurity, and appointed him Ambassador first to St. Petersburg, then to London. His record in these posts was indifferent. At St. Petersburg he conducted the important negotiations about intervention in Hungary; but their success was hardly his desert, as Czar Nicholas disliked him and spoke contemptuously of his abilities. Why Schwarzenberg should have designated him as his successor is not clear. Perhaps he had no other choice; for Foreign Ministers could be recruited from the high nobility only, and the two best men in the service, Hübner and Prokesch-Osten, belonged to the *Beamtenadel*, and thus were out of the running. Possibly the Premier thought that Buol was less of a fool than the other available aristocrats; possibly—though usually a good judge of character—he was fooled himself by Buol's haughty, domineering ways which he mistook for strength.

The new Foreign Minister's first act in office was to improve upon his predecessor's French policy. Schwarzenberg had encouraged Louis Napoleon in his ambition to proclaim himself Emperor, partly because he detested the Republic and sympathized *a priori* with any counter-revolutionary scheme, partly because he strove to detach him from his Italian connections and win him as an ally against Prussia and England. The pivot of Schwarzenberg's diplomacy was his idea that the contest for hegemony in the German Federation could in the long run only be settled by the military annihilation of Prussia. The logic of the situation impelled him, as it had impelled Maria Theresa's great anti-Prussian chancellor Kaunitz, to seek the friendship of France and Russia. The Czars'

support was already pledged and tried: so he concentrated his efforts on securing Napoleon. He appointed the cleverest of his subordinates, his former secretary, Alexander Baron Hübner, as minister at Paris. Hübner, like Bach, understood excellently how to work out in detail the concepts which Schwarzenberg's keen but untrained imagination had crudely sketched out. He was making good progress when the Premier's death abruptly altered the course of the Vienna chancellery.

Count Buol shared the anti-Bonapartist prejudices of the Austrian nobility. He saw in Napoleon, not the tamer and supplanter of the republic, but the upstart; his conservatism, unlike that of Schwarzenberg, was too unimaginative to perceive that Cæsarism was a much more effective cure of revolution than Legitimacy. He instructed Hübner to dissuade Napoleon from assuming the title of Emperor. That intelligent envoy obeyed but reluctantly. Henceforth that half-heartedness which had ever been the bane of Austrian statesmanship and which was but passingly swept aside by Schwarzenberg's cavalier tactics marked Austrian diplomacy at Paris; Hübner, unable to represent a policy with which he agreed, limited himself to the rôle of shock-absorber.

There came plenty of shocks to absorb. Napoleon thumbed his nose at Buol's intrigues and on December 2, 1852, proclaimed himself Emperor of the French. Buol next tried to persuade the Great Powers to refuse recognition. When he saw that his efforts were fruitless he hit upon a brilliant, a unique, expedient. Let the sovereigns, he suggested, recognize Napoleon if that could not be avoided: but let them, in that very act, insult the parvenu! Why, it was the simplest thing in the world. Instead of addressing Napoleon with the "*Monsieur mon frère*" customary in the intercourse of monarchs, they

should address him as "*Monsieur mon ami.*" The proposal was in all seriousness forwarded to Berlin and St. Petersburg. The Czar thought it was an excellent dodge, and agreed. The Prussian King, however, begged to be excused, on the very sensible ground that if by any chance a French gun should go off his possessions would be hit first. He announced categorically that he was going to address the Emperor of the French as "Sir my Brother." After some shaking of his elegant head Buol declared that under the circumstances Francis Joseph would do the same. Nicholas, however, refused to back down, and was left in the lurch by his two allies. He was furious, and the names he called Buol were even less friendly than "*Monsieur mon ami.*"

The net result of this entirely unnecessary incident was, for Austria, the estrangement of Napoleon and the irritation of Russia—an achievement which, as it appeared later, represented Count Buol's usual way of hitting two birds with one stone. For the moment the Foreign Minister made partial amends by improving relations with Prussia. Common scare of the sudden ascent of Napoleon built the bridge on which the victor and the vanquished of Olmütz met half way. The Czar favoured this rapprochement, as he expected from it revival of the alliance of the three conservative powers, and advised Berlin in this sense.

In January, 1853, Francis Joseph repaired to Berlin to visit his affectionate uncle the King. It was the first time that a Habsburg set foot upon the pavement of the capital of Frederick the Great. The real meaning of this historic event was clearly indicated by the minor detail that when, as part of the amenities customary on these occasions, the Emperor of Austria was asked to issue the parole of the day for the garrison, he selected "Leipsic"

—the battlefield where, half a century earlier, the united armies of Austria and Prussia had downed the first Bonaparte.

The Adjutants-General of the two sovereigns, the General Grünne and Gerlach, were actually ordered to draw up a joint plan of campaign for the eventuality of a war with France. This was a radical departure from Schwarzenberg's line; and, indeed, close co-operation with Prussia, in the sense of the brilliant Bruck, was one of the possible alternatives for Austria, commended by weighty considerations. Buol had no love for Prussia; like the rest of his class, he disliked her, but did not hate her with the whitehot passion of a Schwarzenberg. For the moment the Emperor seemed to favour a pro-Prussian course, and his Foreign Minister followed the line of least resistance. The truth was that Buol did not understand the intricate politics of the German Confederation. When in June, 1852, Count Otto Bismarck visited him at Vienna he left with the conviction that the Foreign Minister's ignorance of German affairs was absolutely incredible.

V

Toward the end of 1853 a new crisis confronted Buolian statesmanship with another, still more stringent, test. Tiny Montenegro, since the fifteenth century an ever-rebellious, never quite subdued vassal of the Sultan, once more defied the Porte from its mountain fastnesses. Its princes from the Nyegus family also held the dignity of bishop, which increased their authority but prevented them from marrying. Thus succession, being impossible in the direct line, was the source of constant internal trouble. In 1851 the newly installed Prince Danilo declined the bishopric as an indication of his plan to marry and establish a dynasty in the European sense. The

Turkish Government, realizing that this was the first step toward complete independence, declined to recognize him. As, moreover, the Montenegrins had lately renewed their forays into Ottoman territory, a punitive expedition was decided upon. A large Turkish army, led by the best Turkish general, the Austrian renegade Omer Pasha, invaded the principality, and after overcoming the heroic resistance of the mountaineers, advanced within five hours' march from Cetinje, the capital. The Turkish commander vowed that he would run down and exterminate the Montenegrins to the last man and end the nuisance once for all. At this time an Austrian ultimatum, emphasized by the concentration of an army of 40,000 along the Turkish border, bade him halt.

Since the times of Metternich friendship with the Porte had been one of the cornerstones of Austrian policy. When the Western Powers and Russia sent their fleets to assist the Greek struggle for independence Austria observed benevolent neutrality; later, too, as the guardian of Legitimacy she gave the Sultan her moral support against his rebellious Christian subjects. In 1849, however, the Porte provoked Austrian anger by offering asylum to the Hungarian refugees. Besides, Buol was anxious to restore his standing with the Czar, forfeited by his lack of stamina in the *mon frère-mon ami* affair. It was obviously in accordance with suggestions, not to say instructions, from St. Petersburg that he now threatened the Porte with armed intervention unless Omer Pasha was recalled.

General Jellačić, in command of the army mobilized against Turkey on the Croatian and Dalmatian frontier, would have been delighted to march into Bosnia as the liberator of his South Slav brethren. But the Austrian ultimatum worked. The Porte ordered Omer Pasha to

evacuate Montenegro. The mountaineers were saved. From the Russian court a neatly done-up little velvet case was despatched to Count Buol. At the next gala occasion the Foreign Minister dazzled the guests with the diamonds of his brand-new Russian order.

The chancelleries of Western Europe, and students of history, gasped for breath. Within a few months Count Buol repudiated, in a manner which could not but strike observers as casual, even flippant, two fundamental attitudes of Austrian policy, first, hostility to Prussia, second, good will toward Turkey. In the latter case, at any rate, he might have pleaded that his inconsistency was not unprecedented. Throughout the last 150 years two tendencies wrestled in the Eastern policy of the Habsburg Empire. The older tradition was intensely anti-Turkish; Austria had been the bulwark of Christendom, the deliverer of Hungary. The great Prince Eugene at the beginning and the great Emperor Joseph at the end of the eighteenth century alike saw the historic mission of Austria in the expulsion of the Turk from Europe, and in carrying Western civilization to the Balkans. This tradition, which might be called the liberal one, was then supplanted by Metternich with the Legitimist policy of preserving the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. Did the latest departure signify a deliberate revival of the older policy, or was it merely a Buolian *impromptu*—a short-breathed excursion into a blind alley—another of those half-measures which had been the hereditary curse of the Habsburg race?

The event was to answer. Meanwhile the Czar was satisfied. When the British Ambassador expressed misgivings about the Austrian attitude in case of a Russo-Turkish war, he reassured him: "When I say Russia I mean Austria too. Our interests in Turkey are identi-

cal." He called the first payment on his generous loan of 1849. The bill was honoured. This was most convenient, and a good omen; for Nicholas knew he would before long have to draw on all his resources. The Eastern question, for some time dormant, was waking up, in response to his vigorous poking.

Toward the end of summer, 1853, Europe was astir with warlike echoes. Russia's claim for the protectorate of Orthodox Christians in the Turkish Empire, based on a clause tucked away in a treaty seventy years old, was rending in two the concert of powers. A first-class international quarrel was on. The Austrian Empire had vital interests at stake. Could Francis Joseph, most scrupulously dutiful of princes, devote his undivided attention to the gathering storm? He was engaged in a task no less momentous than that of navigating the vessel of state. He was wooing, and winning, the hand, if not the heart, of the most beautiful princess in Christendom—Elizabeth of Bavaria.

CHAPTER XI

THE BRIDE

I

THE young Emperor of Austria did not face matrimony exactly as a tyro in the art of love. That most careful of mothers, Sophie, who had directed his studies and selected his instructors with so much forethought and discretion, saw to it that nothing should be left to chance in this momentous phase of her son's life. Nor was such precaution unusual. At the Vienna court this delicate and unavoidable business was approached as a matter of hygiene with a simple straightforwardness that had nothing in it of the awed restraints characteristic of the usages of certain savage tribes and our middle class. A female dignitary called *initiatrice* filled a distinguished if unofficial position in the households of budding Archdukes. In the selection of these ladies the guiding consideration was neither pedigree, intellectual polish, nor physical finesse, but sheer animal health. Indeed, the matter, though vastly more important, was rather less complicated than the purchase of a thoroughbred for the Imperial stables. The woman in whose arms Francis Joseph was introduced to some of the facts that every young Emperor should know was a strapping full-bloomed agricultural beauty from the Kremsier district, inhabited by a tall strong race of peasants of mixed Slav

and German blood whose women, rosy-cheeked, big-breasted, broad-hipped, supplied the best wet nurses to successive generations of Viennese nobility.

That sound common sense with which the baby Francis Joseph had impressed the good Baroness Sturmfeder continued to mark his relations with women in more advanced years. The *initiatrice* had successors; but, like that unnamed pioneer, they were interchangeable parts of a smoothly-running machine, not fellow-wayfarers on a pilgrimage of passion. Excess of any kind, save in the expedition of state business and in the destruction of deer, was alien to Francis Joseph's nature even in his early twenties; conscious control marked all his pursuits to a degree which, in a young chap blessed with every imaginable worldly advantage, including perfect health, somehow suggested wanting humanity. In brief, had he been of less exalted birth, say an undergraduate scion of a prosperous line of merchants, maiden aunts might have called him a model young man, but his class-mates would have scorned him as a prig.

The winter of 1851 compensated Viennese society for the dull cares of three years of war and revolution with an especially brilliant season. In the rush of universal gaiety the court led the pace. Up to Shrove Tuesday the Archduchess Sophie alone gave no less than seven balls, avowedly to provide for her son recreation from the strain of government. Francis Joseph, who on his accession bade his youth farewell, now celebrated his entrance into manhood. Keeping physically fit he considered as one of the foremost of his imperial duties; and his favourite ways of exercising his body were, at this period, dancing and horseback-riding. He was an exceptionally early riser; he sat at his desk at 4.30 A.M., no matter how late he had turned in; and it happened some-

times that, returning from a ball at the Schwarzenbergs' or Kinskys' at seven in the morning, he refreshed himself with a cup of coffee and a ride in the Prater, waited on his mother, and attended to his duties as if he had had a full night's rest.

He was very handsome with his reddish-blond hair and silky small moustache, ancestor of the bushy affair which in later years disguised with a benevolent touch a sensuous and selfish upper lip; his milk-and-pink cheeks were clean-shaven as yet; the famous side whiskers with which he, in the sixties, established the standard pattern of Austrian physiognomy, were still in the limbo of unborn things. The dash in his steel-blue eyes had not yet congealed to hardness; they looked with intrepid gaiety into a world which so far had given him everything and exacted nothing in return. His body was pliant and keen like a Damascene blade. Had he been nothing but a lieutenant of lancers, men would have called him a ripping fine-looking fellow, and women would have gone crazy about him—flappers, at least, and ageing amoureuses. But he was no mere lieutenant. He was Emperor; and a swarm of the most beautiful women hummed around him like moths around a lamp.

He was a passionate and excellent dancer,

> "without flattery," wrote an enthusiastic lady, "the best at court, also the most tireless. . . . The countesses revel in the good fortune to be the Emperor's chosen ones! They fly ahead as if fired by Oberon's horn, and enjoy their happiness in full draughts. . . . "

Among these *Kaiserkomtessen*, as they were referred to in society, the pretty Elizabeth Ugarte achieved special prominence. She was eight years the Emperor's

senior. (The hygienic ladies, too, produced by maternal foresight, were well up in their twenties, it was whispered.)

> "The court balls," the Countess Ugarte wrote to a girl friend in Germany, "interest me more than anything else, as each time I dance with our delicious Emperor. I danced the cotillion with him twice so far, which, as you may well imagine, has created great sensation, and flattered *ma petite vanité* not a little. I am, like everybody else, charmed by our dearest Monarch, who unites in him all the good and noble that one may conceive of. He is delightful in conversation, and he improves every time one meets him."

Perhaps his triumphs were too easy. Always to command, never to obey; always to meet enraptured submission, never indifference or haughty disdain; to know fulfilment only, but not the pangs of hope and fear—a very bad curriculum, indeed, for a school of lovers! Could Francis Joseph be blamed for possessing the defects of his qualities? He was rash, impatient, inconsiderate. His table manners exasperated his entourage. He ate extremely fast; as soon as he finished, he rose, humming some tune, and lighted a cigar; the poor ministers and generals, blessed neither with his set of teeth nor his digestion, who by this time had just about contrived to rouse their drowsy appetites, had to rise too, hungry and irritated.

Perhaps the lady who a year later regaled a common acquaintance with the news that His Majesty now hardly ever danced "with the Ugarte woman," and added cattishly, "*Elle n'a pas le talent de conserver les affections*," was not altogether fair to her. But then, in love as in government, the King can do no wrong. Little Eliza-

beth Ugarte consoled herself by joining the fastest set of Viennese society; nothing indicates that her experience broke her heart. Her place had been filled long ago; and in the background an undeterred and enthusiastic reserve of *Kaiserkomtessen* awaited the blissful call.

It was about this time that that honest tempter Kübeck first injected into the young Emperor's mind the corrosive poison of doubt. But that doubt attacked Francis Joseph's certainties about government, politics, Schwarzenberg, Bach—it did not attack, it rather nourished, Francis Joseph's certainties about Francis Joseph. Did ever, at the age of twenty-two, the question flash through his brain, if only for the fraction of a second: "What am *I* worth?" It is the anxiety about the beloved one that sends most young men on long and difficult voyages of exploration into the uncharted land of their own souls. If at the age of twenty-two Francis Joseph ever ventured a brief week-end trip to the edge of that land, to gaze, for a moment, across the border, it has not been recorded. He took the warmth, affection, passion that were so eagerly offered to him as he had taken his Empire—as his due in the natural, divinely prescribed order of things. In this respect, indeed, there was no difference between him and a lieutenant of hussars seducing a grisette over a bottle of champagne in a *chambre séparée*. His vices, such as he had, were entirely untainted by the virtue of reflection.

II

The days of eclectic irresponsibility were drawing to a close. One of the sacred duties an Emperor owes himself, his peoples, and the divine scheme of things, is to marry and beget, not children, for that aspect of the

matter is irrelevant, but a direct line. By the year 1853 the mothers of Catholic princesses all over Europe contracted the habit of facing toward Vienna as they knelt down in prayer, as faithful Mussulmans are wont to turn Meccaward. The Emperor of Austria was beyond question the best match in Christendom. The Czarevitch Alexander was already married; the Prince of Wales still a little boy and a Protestant besides; the Emperor of the French a bit too new, and anyway unsafe. Not the least among Francis Joseph's advantages was that he was, in his own right, one of the richest young men in Europe. Thrice fortunate, indeed, was the girl who would find favour in his eyes.

There was, in court circles, much talk about the chances of the Archduchess Elizabeth. She was the daughter of Joseph, Palatine of Hungary, and thus a second cousin. Beautiful and clever, she was, at twenty-two, left a widow by the premature death of the Archduke Ferdinand, of the cadet line of Este, to whom she had been married but a year. A happy comradeship sprang up between her and Francis Joseph, one year her senior, and was blossoming, so observers agreed, into young love when the Archduchess Sophie interposed and scotched the *liaison*. She had made her selection, and she was going to see it through. Her son was to marry in *her* family—so there!

It was all settled between her and her sister Ludovica, wife of the Duke Max of Bavaria. The couple had five daughters, and Francis Joseph was to have the eldest, the Princess Helene. She was a serious-minded, well brought-up girl, not ill-looking, and deeply religious. In August, 1853, the ducal couple, with the prospective bride and her sister Elizabeth, arrived at the Archduchess Sophie's summer residence at Ischl. The Em-

peror was expected, too, and the official engagement was to take place in due course.

On the morning of August 16th Francis Joseph arrived from Vienna on the scene of the happiest memories of his childhood where he now was to meet his intended bride. Early next morning the Imperial family and their guests went to attend mass. At the church door the Emperor's mother stepped aside and, with a deep curtsey, allowed her young niece Elizabeth to enter first.

The few courtiers, male and female, who witnessed this scene were amazed and thrilled. That the haughty Archduchess Sophie, the first lady at court, yielded precedence to a sixteen-year-old princess admitted of but one explanation. A week later official announcement confirmed the great news that by then was on everybody's lips: His Majesty the Emperor was engaged to marry his cousin, Her Highness the Princess Elizabeth of Bavaria.

Around no event of nineteenth century history save another, later episode of Habsburg annals—the dark story of Mayerling—has the crowd's unquenchable craving for romance woven a thicker, more glamorous tissue of legend than around the happenings of those twenty-four hours between the Emperor's arrival and his mother's obeisance to Elizabeth. It is related how Francis Joseph, radiant in the white, scarlet and gold of a Field Marshal, had gone for a stroll in the ancestral park before he met any of his mother's guests; how he was suddenly overcome by the vision of a virgin, more beautiful than fairies, with her long dark tresses flowing over her shoulders, her face oval and tender like a white flower, and her deep brown eyes half-hidden behind long lashes like stars trembling through foliage; how she, clad in a simple white frock and surrounded by a pack of hounds, was at first unaware of the mute homage of his glance; and how

she at last, stirred from her reverie, recognized her speechless admirer and, fleet like a hind, with cheeks aglow, vanished in the thicket. Later in the day, the narrative proceeds, the Emperor sought her out in the nursery. Ignoring a gasping governess, he pressed her in his arms, and she, half-crying, half-laughing with happiness, laid her head on his shoulder and returned his ardent vows. Then he led her downstairs. Hand in hand, they entered the drawing-room to announce the glad tidings. The old Duke at first flew into a dudgeon over the implied slight to his eldest daughter; but Francis Joseph, clasping the quivering maiden firmly to his bosom, exclaimed, "It's Elizabeth, or nobody!" Thereupon the Duke relented and blessed the young folks.

The story is current in many versions; they all agree in one—the culminating—detail: that Elizabeth, too, fell in love head over heels. Alas! it is exactly in this phase that the touching idyl is sheer invention. It is a fact that Duke Maximilian resented the Emperor's passing over the older girl; it is true that Francis Joseph had to put his foot down. But if on that memorable day Elizabeth's eyes were dimmed with tears those were not the tears of chaste love but of despair. The truth is that Elizabeth conceived a sudden implacable aversion to her cousin. She told her mother that she would never marry him. The Duchess tried argument to soothe her; she only stamped her feet. At last Ludovica played the trump of intimidation: "One cannot say No! to an Emperor." "I wish he were a tailor!" sobbed the girl.

A tailor! Was it ironic coincidence—was it spiteful memory that urged Elizabeth to invoke, in her disgust, the craft of that luckless assassin Libényi? Who knows? That Francis Joseph's philanderings with the sanitary and other ladies should have reached Elizabeth's well-

guarded ears is highly unlikely; that she had some, however vague, knowledge of her cousin's gory record as a ruler may, on the other hand, well be assumed; for in her circles the two thousand or so death warrants of the past four years which had earned for Francis Joseph the hatred of his peoples and the loathing of Western public opinion represented the sterling achievement of an exemplary young monarch. In the early fifties Vienna newspapers were wont to refer to him as "*unser blutjunger Kaiser*," and everybody but the censor knew that the emphasis was on *Blut.* As to journals printed outside Austria, they did not have to resort to play with ambiguous idioms in commenting on the Emperor's methods. The tight-fitting scarlet pantaloons which encased Francis Joseph's shapely calves may have suggested to the hyper-sensitive girl associations that those important accessories of a field marshal's dress uniform were not intended to convey.

She was sixteen. She did not know men and was afraid of them. She accepted Francis Joseph's suit under maternal compulsion.

III

The myth makes much of her happy childhood. In reality it had been a childhood neither much happier nor much less happy than that of most little girls not born in ducal purple. If there was in it more than average comfort and colour, there was also more than average restraint. One of the prerogatives of the children of princes is boredom. At the age of four her mother took her to court balls. The child enjoyed the first half hour of the glittering spectacle; but after she had had her share of the ices and sweetmeats her raptures must have yielded to desperate yawns and fidgets calling forth instant repris-

als on the part of the unrelenting Duchess. Ludovica was a woman of principles. "*Il faut que les princesses apprennent à s'ennuyer avec grâce*," she used to repeat.

Another of her educational maxims was, "*Surtout ne pas monter l'imagination*." It would seem that these rules were moulded as exact negatives of her husband's conduct; for the Duke most disgracefully refused to be bored, and he suffered from what to his wife must have appeared as a lamentably vulgar excess of imagination. Ludovica, ambitious and domineering, was a weaker replica of her sister Sophie; she had the latter's taste for state intrigue without her talent, and a passion for the proprieties in lieu of the older woman's fiery orthodoxy. A more conventional husband would have been either completely subdued by her, or else violently unhappy; perhaps both. The Duke Max, however, was anything but conventional.

They had been bullied into wedlock. The Princess Ludovica wanted to marry a Prince of Braganza, who later became King of Portugal; the Duke Maximilian Joseph did not want to marry at all. But the angry God of the House of Wittelsbach disposed otherwise. It was a sullen groom that on September 9, 1828, led to the altar a grim bride. In due course their union was blessed with eight children. In the case of ordinary mortals such fecundity usually, though not necessarily, signifies mutual devotion; in the case of princes it merely signifies frequent devotional exercises before the dynastic fetish.

The ducal *ménage* in the castle of Possenhofen, on the picturesque shore of the Lake of Starnberg, was a singular one. The couple were not exactly poor, but, what with eight children, five of them girls, economies had to be practised; and it was easier to practise them at the château in the country than in the palace at

Munich where only a few weeks were spent every year. The country around was the loveliest imaginable, but the house itself was a cold formal affair; it was difficult to enter personal relations with furnishings that one was not free to change or replace or even move around to suit oneself, as everything belonged to the entail and was strictly inventoried; it was almost like living in a hotel.

In time mutual aversion of husband and wife hit on a sensible arrangement. The Duke made his quarters on the ground floor; the Duchess inhabited the *bel étage*. If they could not get along together, they at least refused to squabble; they simply avoided each other. The Duke saw to it that chance meetings should be limited to a minimum; he spent at home as little time as possible; and it was typical of the household that while the little princes and princesses had to be announced by attendants whenever they wanted to see their father, his illegitimate children (he had a lot) could come and go as they pleased.

Like all Wittelsbachs, the Duke Max was an eccentric, though he differed from most members of his lineage by remaining comparatively sane. He loved poetry and music, and published several volumes of verse and some songs; when at Munich he surrounded himself, greatly to the disgust of his wife, with all kinds of writers and painters and musicians. The record of his travels in Arabia, Syria and North Africa, a volume called *Wanderings in the Orient*, possesses some literary merit. He was accompanied by his favourite fiddler, and the two played on the zither and violin the airs of the cool Bavarian uplands on many a desert night, surrounded by squatting groups of grave Bedouins. At home, too, the Duke loved to go forth, dressed in the picturesque green-trimmed light

grey jacket and short buckskin breeches of the highlanders, and to spend, after a day's rambling, a cozy evening in a cowherd's hut high up on the mountain, supping on cheese and sour milk, playing the zither or gazing at the stars to the melancholy tinkle of cowbells.

Of his eight legitimate children Elizabeth was his favourite. She shared his love for nature, for simple fare, for animals and physical exercise. He brought her up practically as a boy, took her along on his mountain wanderings, and was delighted by her ability to ride, even in her early teens, the wildest mount. He detested and scoffed at etiquette and all courtly restraint, and found a ready disciple in the girl who kept her governesses continuously on the verge of fainting by climbing trees, racing peasant boys, knocking about with the dogs, and other masculine and unladylike pursuits. She picked up languages with great ease, but toward book learning she was little inclined, and in matters of culture she was, at sixteen, considered as the most backward member of the family.

Toward his wife the Duke was painfully correct. He kept out of her way, but he saw to it that all her wants should be supplied promptly. On her side the Duchess Ludovica could never, not for a single day in sixty years, forget that she had married below her rank. She was the daughter of Maximilian I, by the grace of God (and of Napoleon) King of Bavaria; of her five sisters one married an Emperor, three married Kings, and the fifth was an Emperor's mother.[1] Her own husband, on the other hand, came from the cadet line of the House of Wittelsbach; he was styled, not Duke *of* Bavaria, like members of the royal branch, but Duke *in* Bavaria—a momentous

[1] A seventh half-sister married Eugène Beauharnais, Napoleon's brilliant stepson, and is usually omitted from the august list.

difference! One of the reasons why she chose to live at Possenhofen all the year round was that at Munich she was constantly reminded of the precedence of the senior line. The sense of inferior position, more even than the basic temperamental disagreement with her husband, destroyed her peace of mind. "We *never* should have got married," she reiterated for half a century. At the bier of Maximilian, who died shortly after they had celebrated their diamond wedding, she felt more bitterness than sorrow.

Even with antecedents such as these Elizabeth might have become a very happy wife indeed; but the odds were against it. The elements making for matrimonial failure were too numerous. There was parental pressure, mitigated, perhaps, by stirring curiosity, but still sufficiently resented. There was too much boyishness; there was a penchant for solitary ways. There was, above all, an overemphasized tendency to freedom, so far manifest in a chronic though passive rebelliousness against court conventions as applied to the ducal nursery. Emerging from an ultra-emotional childhood anchored on the image of an adored and idealized father, an image rich with associations of the sweet scent of pines, of the roseate glow of Alpine sunsets, of the slender melancholy chords of the zither, and of shocked governesses cackling and fluttering like scared hens, Elizabeth may have found in the imperial pedant who was her lord and master traits absurdly and painfully reminiscent of all that she had disliked in her mother. How often an echo of the maternal "We never should have got married" must have resounded in her ears as she contemplated a husband who preferred the magnificent, the symmetric, the fixed forms of Schönbrunn to the variety, the friendliness, the woodland romance, of Laxenburg!

Francis Joseph's Wedding

The ceremony in the Augustine Fathers' Church, April 24, 1854

IV

On April 23, 1854, Elizabeth, accompanied by her parents, landed at Nussdorf, a picturesque suburb of Vienna at the foot of the tall steep cliff known as Kahlenberg, and was received by her imperial bridegroom. From Linz the last stage of the journey had been made by steamer down the Danube. Passing the plateau of Melk, where the noble baroque dome and twin spires of the Benedictine abbey, graceful and solid like a *fugato* by Handel, crowns dark green terraces of ancient elms and plane-trees rising from the tender silvery maze of willow groves lining the water's edge, the bridal boat paddled through the winding narrows of the country called Wachau, whose lovely hills toward the end of April are an undulating sea of apple blossom, dotted with quaint-gabled, red-tiled cozy little towns, rock-ledged vineyards and solemn brown ruins perched on fantastic crags. No more charming approach to her new domains might have been chosen for the fairy princess.

The solemn entry into the capital took place on the day after the arrival. Elizabeth, with her parents, drove from Schönbrunn to the palace called Theresianum, whence, by ancient usage, the Imperial nuptial processions departed. At four in the afternoon, the bride, accompanied by her mother, started out in a state coach, drawn by eight milk-white horses whose manes were braided with red and gold cord; from the heads of the proud beasts nodded white ostrich plumes; their harness and reins were heavily spangled with gold. On the side of each horse walked a footman in full gala. The roof of the carriage bore the imperial crown; between the tall daintily-swung rear springs perched a gilt eagle, with the imperial apple and sceptre in its talons; panels painted by

the hand of Rubens adorned the coach doors, while the interior was lined with gold-embroidered black velvet; the spokes of the wheels were of pure gold.

Amid the thunder of cannon and peals from all the church bells in Vienna the cortège proceeded along streets lined with rows of burghers in their festive best. At the new bridge across the river Wien, to be dedicated by her passage, Elizabeth was received by the burgomaster and council of the imperial city. The roadway was covered with rich emerald lawn strewn with roses, and passed through a lane of rhododendrons and orange blossoms. At the Kaernthner Gate, through which the city proper was entered, rose a granite figure of a winged female, alighting on the threshold of the town to place a wreath at the bride's feet.

At the main gate of the Hofburg Francis Joseph, behind whom was arrayed the Imperial family with all the Archdukes and Archduchesses, welcomed Elizabeth. The wedding ceremony took place at 6.30 in the church of the Augustine monks which for centuries had served as the family chapel of the Habsburgs. It was tapestried with crimson and gold brocade, and the walls of the nave were covered by the famous Habsburg gobelins. Three thousand wax candles spread a festive glow upon a spectacle of unforgettable splendour as the entry of the bridal train was heralded by the blare of trumpets and the roll of kettledrums.

Elizabeth wore a pale pink satin gown embroidered with silver and trimmed with white roses; a white lace shawl covered her shoulders, and a wreath of white and red roses concealed a brilliant diadem encircling her dark hair. The white and scarlet of the generals, the blue, green and crimson of the guards, the Oriental gala of the Hungarian and Polish nobles, dazzling with furs and

silks and velvets, with rubies and sapphires and aigrets; the gold-embroidered green uniforms of officials, the scarlet robes of cardinals and the purple of seventy bishops; the exotic pomp of foreign diplomats, and the glitter of gold lace, of helmets and swords and halberds sprinkled over the whole, merged into a magnificent setting for the drama of two human lives that was being enacted at the high altar. It was an overwhelmingly masculine scene; the white, pink and yellow gowns of the ladies appeared pale and secondary against the brilliant and variegated hues of martial and sacerdotal attire, suggesting to a detached spectator (if there was one in that loyally enthused assemblage) the observation that by some subtle trick of selection the normal relation between male and female finery, as prevailing in the animal kingdom, was restored here among the kings and princes of humankind.

The ceremony was over. The Cardinal Rauscher had pronounced the kneeling couple husband and wife and blessed them; outside along the glacis the guns thundered again; and Elizabeth, who had entered the church of the Augustine fathers as a little princess of sixteen, now left it as Empress of one of the greatest empires in the world. In the evening, after the bridal supper, served on the famous pure gold plate of the Habsburg treasure chamber, a reception followed, and all the notables of the realm and the foreign ambassadors and ministers were introduced to Her Majesty, seated on the throne beside her imperial spouse. About half past ten the presentations, too, came to an end; and their Majesties "were pleased," in the words of the official report, "to withdraw, under escort, to the inner apartments, whereupon everybody took leave."

It was a great day, unforgettable and unforgotten.

To celebrate it, a worthy principal of a Viennese college, Ferdinand Schubert by name, composed a "Prayer for three Voices, for our Beloved Emperor Francis Joseph." It sold threepence a copy, and within a few weeks the brave headmaster owned choice morsels of suburban real estate bought with the proceeds.

V

It was not long before the young Empress discovered that, rather than submit to maternal command, she would have done better to choose, the only other alternative of flagrantly disobedient princesses, incarceration in a convent. Perhaps her disappointment in her husband was not very keen, seeing that she had expected ever so little. But she soon found herself steeped in a veritable morass of unforeseen difficulties into which she sank the deeper the more she struggled to regain firm footing.

To begin with, there was etiquette. It was a hundred and fifty years since the Habsburgs had lost their Hispanic possessions; of the heritage of Ferdinand and Isabel there remained only the blood of the mad Joanna in their veins, a stud of marvellous Andalusian horses cherished for equestrian parades, and the rules of courtly conduct. At the very first state dinner in her new home Elizabeth, who at parental Possenhofen and in the royal precincts of Munich had scorned and defied the comparatively pliant code borrowed by the Bavarian rulers from the court of their ancient ally the King of France, was brought face to face with the ironclad Spanish variety. Having taken her seat at table she began to pull off her long gloves when a lady-in-waiting whispered to her: "Your Majesty must not do that!" She was frozen with astonishment. "Why not?" "The Em-

press of Austria must dine with her gloves on. It's the rule." "Henceforth *this* shall be the rule," she said calmly, divesting her hands of the obnoxious casings.

That, however, was only preliminary skirmishing. The *protocol* of the Vienna court fairly bristled with preposterous injunctions hallowed by their Castilian origin and four centuries of acquiescence. In her Bavarian home Elizabeth always had a glass of beer with her luncheon. This was in an age when the strong dark brew of Munich was prescribed by physicians even to children as a blood builder and stimulant. At first in Vienna, too, the accustomed beverage appeared on the table at the mid-day meal. One day the glass of beer was missing. Elizabeth asked for it, but received an apology instead. "The Empress of Austria must not drink beer; the Spanish etiquette allows wine only." Some busybody had unearthed the forgotten rule. There was a storm in a beer glass; but Elizabeth won her point.

Next came the War of the Slippers. One morning the Empress asked for a pair of shoes which she had worn a few days earlier and liked particularly. Her maid informed her that she could not have them. "The Empress of Austria must not wear a pair of shoes more than once."

This time there was a pitched battle; for in ignoring the nonsensical precept whose origin seemed lost among the obscure superstitions of bygone centuries Elizabeth collided with a very real and powerful vested interest. The three hundred and sixty-five pairs of brand-new shoes which the Empress was supposed to discard every year represented the spoils of her staff of maidservants. Thus Spanish etiquette, that dried and pressed flower of Christian chivalry, revealed its fundamental kinship

with the code of the Congo jungle-dwellers whose sacred rites bestow economic advantage on the enforcing medicine-men.

Once more Elizabeth had her way; she established the right of an Empress to wear her shoes as long as she liked. But the incident opened her eyes to an amazing, an alarming fact. She was surrounded by enemies. The maidservants who resented her attitude in the affair of the shoes as stingy enjoyed the moral support of her ladies-in-waiting who deprecated it as undignified. And this was but the vanguard of censure. The entire Austrian aristocracy turned up its nose in a conspiracy of criticism. They called her "Pearl of Possenhofen" with an intonation which clearly indicated that they really meant country bumpkin. She was provincial; she was vulgar; she always managed to do the wrong thing.

She went out shopping on foot, accompanied by one of her ladies. She was recognized, surrounded, and cheered; the crowd well-nigh smothered her with affection, and the police had to extricate her and escort her to the palace. The court pouted with disapproval. "Her Majesty seems to think she is still in her Bavarian mountains. She forgets what she owes to her position."

The experience frightened her. She was by nature extremely shy, and she was equally anxious to eschew street ovations and courtly cavil. She refused to go or drive out in town at all, and confined her walks to those sections of the palace garden and the Schönbrunn park which were closed to the public. Wrong again! "Her Majesty does not realize that one of the duties of an Empress is to show herself to her loyal subjects as frequently as possible. She forgets what she owes to her position," jeered the critics.

But then, her position forgot what it owed to her.

She was the Empress, and she was defenceless. Francis Joseph, who once had said that he would marry her or none, now offered no protection to his bride against a campaign of intrigue, slander and subtle insult generalled by his own mother, the Archduchess Sophie.

The matrimonial triangle of beautiful young wife, jealous mother-in-law and irresolute husband is an ancient one. In the present case a few new elements entered into it. Sophie had renounced the crown of an Empress for the more substantial power that she expected to wield through an affectionate and submissive son. She was not to be shoved into the place of bad second by a mere slip of a girl. She could not, of course, hope that her son would remain a bachelor; but she fully intended that he should marry a woman who would fit into *her* scheme of things. She had thwarted Elizabeth of Este because, among other things, she thought she was too pretty and too clever. She had promoted her niece Helene because, among other things, she thought she was neither. Elizabeth of Bavaria cut across her accounting. She was not going to take it lying down. If she could not stop the marriage, she could at least throw a wet blanket over its success.

Sophie was merciless. She had asserted her precedence at court against two Empresses. One, Marianne, was living in happy seclusion at the Castle of Hradschin at Prague. The kindly wife of the good Ferdinand had no ambition in this world beyond hearing mass daily; when, at the time of her husband's abdication, there was a question of according to her the style of Empress-Mother ("*Mère? De quoi?*" inquired that wicked old wag Metternich) she declined it. She was no trouble. Otherwise the Dowager Empress Caroline Augusta. Fourth wife and widow of the Emperor Francis, she was Sophie's

eldest sister. No mother ever hung with a tenderer passion on her son than did this childless step-grandmother on the grandson who was also her nephew. To her he was not the Emperor, really; he remained the little Franzi boy whose perambulator she had wheeled around in the park of Schönbrunn. Sophie had her banished to Salzburg. The sweet old lady, who would not and could not hurt a fly, was guilty of the unpardonable crime of taking precedence of her; and Sophie would walk in to dinner behind nobody. In tearful letters the poor dear soul begged her Franzi to allow her to return to Vienna and end her days near him; she met with adamantine refusal.

Sophie declared war on Elizabeth. She could not, of course, carry hostilities into her bedroom; but short of that she shrank from nothing. At first her campaign assumed the form of an attempt to "educate" her daughter-in-law—to break her in to the duties and demeanour of an Empress. But breaking in was the last thing that Sophie or anybody else could do with Elizabeth. Her pride was as indomitable as it was sensitive. And, inexperienced, also utterly disdainful of anything that smacked of intrigue or meanness, she unconsciously played into the hands of the older woman. She refused to do a thousand things that she was supposed to do; she insisted on doing a thousand others that were strictly forbidden. And Sophie's allies and spies and *agents provocateurs* were everywhere.

But spies and *agents provocateurs* were not needed. Elizabeth transgressed quite openly and with enthusiasm. There was her mania for horses. An Empress of Austria, of course, was allowed to ride; but only on safe mounts specially trained for the exalted task, at specified hours and in specified places. Elizabeth smashed these rules

into a cocked hat. Her greatest pleasure was to tackle savage stallions that even the grooms approached with cautious respect; and she mastered them all. She went through all the intricacies of the *haute école* whose ancient traditions, heritage of the Moorish ridingmasters of Cordoba, found a shrine at the so-called Spanish Stables in the Vienna Hofburg. Not content even with that, she took lessons from the stars of a celebrated circus. Her cross-country rides (the noble art of the hunt she was to learn only later in England and Ireland) made the hair of her attendant ladies stand on end. In the morning her first errand was to the stables, and she would spend hours feeding her favourites and talking horseflesh to the grooms.

This was, of course, conduct most unbecoming a lady, let alone an Empress. And it was only one instance of many. Whoever heard of an Empress taking long walks in the country all by herself? And of an Empress wearing, on such walks, short skirts showing an inch or so of her ankles, and low-heeled shoes just like a man? And then there was the bathroom issue. One of the first questions Elizabeth asked at Schönbrunn was, "Where is the bathroom?" A bathroom! Of course there was no bathroom at Schönbrunn. Nor at the Hofburg. Such new-fangled English nonsense was not countenanced at all. The members of the all-highest Imperial Family were not so dirty as to need bathrooms. Charles V had had no bathroom, nor Leopold I, nor Maria Theresa. There were other ways of keeping one's body clean, thank you. But Elizabeth was not thus to be put off. She insisted. She persevered. She fought. A year went by—two years—and still she did not give it up. At last a bathroom was installed for her. Two bathrooms: one at Schönbrunn, the other at the Hofburg. But by that

time she was known to everybody at court for what she was. A Modernist, that's what she was! A faddist, an eccentric, perhaps even—shsh, who knows—a Radical!

VI

Perhaps it was Not So Bad As All That—but it was Bad Enough. Certainly she had funny tastes and preferences. She read books—all kinds of books—but chiefly poetry. Now, Francis Joseph also read poetry—it was the only brand of literature that he, well, not exactly cared for, but endured. But he chose his poets with discrimination—the Baron Zedlitz, for instance, an excellent author, very loyal and conservative; or Rudolf Hirsch, recommended no less highly by the Minister of Interior; then there were two officials of the Galician police who wrote very nice poems too. Elizabeth, on the other hand, was not above reading atheists like Goethe and rebels like Byron—even, *horribile dictu*—a Jewish rebel like Heine! And she did not stop at reading such stuff. She even expressed desire to know the writers themselves—to invite them! That, really, was the limit! Did she think that Vienna was Munich, or Paris? Authors, artists, musicians, and suchlike rabble were not received at the Vienna court. Not even a decent Countess would stoop to opening her house to them. If an Austrian had been Shakespeare, Galilei, Raphael and Nelson all in one, he would not be admitted to society unless he had sixteen quarterings. That Mozart was patronized by the highest circles? That the Emperor Joseph once called on a scribbler named Voltaire in a garret? Ah, yes, but that was before the Revolution; and the Revolution just showed what consorting with such people would lead to.

Sophie understood only too well how to plant little

twigs of suspicion in her son's mind. In that fertile soil they rapidly grew into trees. Her allies watered them diligently. One of these allies was the Cardinal Rauscher; another the Adjutant-General Count Grünne. The former, because he did not entirely trust Elizabeth's orthodoxy; the latter, because he always sided with the stronger party as a matter of principle. What chance did a girl in her seventeenth year stand against a Triple Alliance like theirs?

She had every chance in the world. She was seventeen, a radiant beauty, and a bride; and the Emperor was in love with her. That she still lost the battle—that the *entente discordiale* of the hard and violent old woman, the fanatical priest, and the loquacious and crude courtier won a stronger hold on her husband than her charms, suggests a fact that does not admit of direct proof, but is borne out by the circumstantial evidence of the subsequent forty years. As man and wife—as man and woman, if you will—Francis Joseph and Elizabeth never got along together. As a bride she was too young, too delicate, too much like a boy. Considered as a liberal education, the buxom beauty of Kremsier and the ever-ready countesses were, after all, somewhat one-sided. The frail virgin who had been estranged by the field marshal's scarlet trousers must have been frightened by the lieutenant's strategy. Cavalry charges may be, under circumstances, an excellent mode of attack; as a method of holding a fortress they leave something to be desired.

The first child of the union was a girl—the Archduchess Sophie, born after a year's marriage. That in itself was a disappointment—an Empress whose first-born is not a boy is guilty of grave dereliction of duty—which the Emperor's mother, in her solicitude for the welfare of the Dynasty, could not but deplore. After an-

other twelvemonth came another child, another girl. The Emperor's mother, now seriously disquieted, pursed her lips and shook her head.

It was whispered in Vienna that the Emperor was resuming some of the habits of his bachelorhood. That such whispers reached the ears of the Empress may not have been altogether due to carelessness. She was proud; she was vain; she must have suffered agonies. The Emperor's mother was a very clever woman.

CHAPTER XII

THE GREAT REFUSAL

I

The Montenegrin issue was a prelude and a test. Nicholas of Russia wished to ascertain just how much strain Austrian gratitude would stand. He was delighted to find that it could stand a good deal. He was reassured. He could now proceed to the real business: the conquest of Constantinople.

Nicholas was a sportsman. He played the game strictly by the rules. One of these rules prescribed that in robbing the unspeakable Turk a Christian monarch must always be actuated by the loftiest motives. He addressed an ultimatum to the Porte, demanding recognition of his protectorate over all Greek Orthodox subjects of the Ottoman Empire, as provided by the Treaty of Kuchuk Kainardji of 1774. The Porte, well trained in the art of translating the most sublime diplomatic French into plain business Turkish, understood only too clearly the real import of this demand, and refused. Thereupon, in July, 1853, a Russian army crossed the Pruth and occupied the two Danubian principalities.

That proud possessor of the new Russian decoration, Count Buol, began, in his capacity of Austrian Foreign Minister, to feel uneasy. This was a serious matter. He intimated to St. Petersburg that Austria had to insist on preserving the territorial integrity of Turkey. Firmly

resolved on making mincemeat of it, Nicholas assured his dear Brother Francis Joseph that the territorial integrity of Turkey was sacred to him, too. The occupation of the two Danubian provinces was a temporary measure. He held them merely for security—as soon as the Porte recognized his claim to the Protectorate he would withdraw his troops. Under no circumstances would his army, he assured the Austrian Government, cross the Danube into Bulgaria.

These assurances were received with mingled sentiments at Vienna. Similar ones elicited quite unmingled hostility at Paris and London. Confident in the support of the Western Powers, on October 4, 1853, the Porte declared war.

The Vienna Government was deeply worried. One thing was certain: the pledge of unconditional neutrality which the Czar demanded could not be given. In a Balkan imbroglio the Austrian Empire had vital interests at stake. These must be safeguarded. But how? Three parties suggested three answers.

The feudal nobility, most of the generals, in brief, the extreme Right, advocated unswerving loyalty to Russia. It was the logical corollary of the course pursued since 1849. It was prescribed by the traditional solidarity of the Conservative powers; it was dictated by gratitude for the Czar's generous succour against the Hungarian rebels. Yes, Austria must stand shoulder to shoulder with her ally. But that did not mean handing a blank cheque to the Czar. The greatest of Austrian generals, Count Radetzky, regarded as the leader of the Russophiles, proposed that a treaty should be concluded with Russia whereby Austria would obtain Serbia, Bosnia and Albania—the lands west and north of Salonica—as her share of the Turkish liquidation.

What the wise old Field Marshal had in mind was not so much aggrandizement in the East as security in the West. More clearly than anybody else he realized that only the alliance of the three Conservative powers—the Holy Alliance—could in the long run save Lombardy and Venetia for Austria. Others, the Prince Windischgraetz, for instance, may not have taken such a long view; they favoured the Russian orientation simply because the Czar's government was the bulwark of anti-constitutionalism and anti-liberalism.

For exactly the same reason the upper bourgeoisie, and whatever survived of the progressives of 1848, championed alliance with France and England. Their leader was Alexander Bach. Here, at last, was his chance to repay, with interest, the insults heaped upon him by Nicholas in 1851 and '52. As a first instalment he eased the censorship, and the liberal newspapers, still muzzled in other respects, could freely preach the crusade against Muscovite tyranny. As a price for Austrian support, it was suggested, England and France should induce Turkey to cede the Danubian principalities, perhaps also Serbia and Bosnia, to the Habsburg Empire. The minister to Paris, Hübner, was one of the principal advocates of this Western course.

The third tendency crystallized under the leadership of Bruck. Austria, that far-sighted statesman argued, must pursue neither a pro-Russian nor a pro-Western, but a pro-Austrian policy—and that meant a German policy. In close alliance with the other German great power, Prussia, the Vienna Government could keep Russian ambitions within bounds and at the same time exclude Western—British and French—interference from the Balkans which belonged to the Austrian sphere of interest. The vigorous outlines of Bruck's great mid-

European scheme were clearly perceivable behind this proposal which was heartily supported by the chief of the general staff, General Hess, next to Radetzky the most gifted and popular of Austrian commanders.

Francis Joseph at last was face to face with an epochal decision. He was under a tremendous obligation to the Czar. He owed him nothing less than his throne. The debt, indeed, was so great that it was almost no debt at all; for its consciousness overtaxed imperial endurance. He was, after all, a sovereign, not a vassal. Nicholas's cold-blooded assurance with which he took for granted the subservience of Austria irked him. Francis Joseph saw the path of duty clearly blazed ahead. Whatever happened he had to show Nicholas that he was his own master.

He was willing to pledge neutrality. But not unconditionally. He demanded guaranties that the Russian army would remain on the left bank of the Danube; or, if the course of the war rendered crossing the river absolutely necessary, that the Czar would under no circumstances deviate from his previous declarations to the effect that he did not seek conquests nor desire to interfere with the relations between the Sultan and his subjects.

> "Such a pledge," Francis Joseph wrote, "with the supplement that you will not attempt to change the status of the European provinces of Turkey, I must absolutely have in my hands, in the interests of Austria which, as you will understand, alone can guide me."

Nicholas's reply palpitated with indignation.

> "With the frankness which you know to be mine, and with the affection which I cherish for you, I must confess that your letter caused me

> great surprise mingled with grief. . . . To demand the repetition of my assurances, to doubt my word already given, is monstrous as well as supererogatory. . . . Would you really adopt the cause of the Turk as your own? Apostolic Emperor, would your conscience suffer you to do that? If so, very well . . . in that case Russia will, under the holy cross, follow her sacred destiny all alone. But I declare without hesitancy that if you join my enemies this will be a parricidal war."

The Czar proposed a joint protectorate over the Christian peoples and a guaranty that the liberated provinces would never interfere with the domestic peace of the adjoining Austrian domains inhabited by kindred peoples. He was still, he concluded, the same tender friend as he had shown himself in a previous emergency.

> "The present moment is no less serious, for we must decide whether we three,[1] in the face of the dangers that threaten us, wish to remain united and strong, or whether the time-honoured alliance which we have inherited from our predecessors and which for forty years secured the happiness of Europe, shall disappear for ever, only to be succeeded by the most terrible chaos."

Nicholas reinforced his plea by despatching a special envoy, Count Orlov, to Francis Joseph. But in the meantime his manifestoes to the Russian nation, as well as the rebellions stirred up by his agents in the Balkans, made it perfectly plain that his purpose was conquest. Francis Joseph told Orlov and the Russian ambassador at Vienna, Baron Meyendorf, that Nicholas's terms were unacceptable; he could never consent to Russian protectorate over the Slav peoples.

[1] The Czar, the Emperor of Austria, and the King of Prussia.

About this time the friendship between the Archduchess Sophie and Bach reached the high-water mark; and Sophie joined the Western party with the furious single-mindedness which was characteristic of all her actions. She saw the better chance of territorial gains in the alliance with France and England; she may have wished to disentangle her son from the oppressive patronage of the Czar; she did not realize that by loosening the trust which for over a generation had forged the two Empires together she was undermining the very foundations of the autocracy which she so zealously had helped to entrench. She, too, was harassed by the magnitude of the obligation of 1849; and the idea was growing on her essentially feminine mind, bent on facts and results alone, contemptuous of procedure and of the male nonsense about honour, that one way of settling that obligation was to pretend that there wasn't any.

The position of the Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs amidst this three-cornered struggle of factions was a singular one. Having declared, on the very day when the Russian vanguard invaded Moldavia, that "the intimate alliance with Russia offers the strongest check to the spread of the revolutionary spirit," he seems to have caught the revolutionary infection himself, for he veered around and embraced with such passion as he was capable of the cause of the Western party and Bach. His motive for this change of front is not apparent, but the Russian ambassador Meyendorf, who was married to his sister, was quite horrified over what he called his brother-in-law's treachery. On the other hand, the Westerners found him slow and lukewarm and Hübner, in his diary, accused him of ensconcing himself behind ambiguities and of always leaving little loopholes open.

Pressed hard by both Russophiles and Russophobes,

Francis Joseph escaped two difficult alternatives by choosing the third. Once more he remembered that he was, first and last, a German prince. Negotiations with the Prussian Government, along the lines suggested by Bruck, were in full swing when on March 12 England and France declared war on Russia. Thereupon the Czar, scrapping his solemn pledge, ordered his army to cross the Danube. Presently Prince Paskievitch invested the important Turkish fortress of Silistria, key to the road to Constantinople. This was too much for the Austrian Government. On April 20 the treaty of alliance with Prussia, concluded in 1851, was renewed for three years. Simultaneously the King of Prussia promised to co-operate with the Emperor of Austria in clearing the principalities of Russian troops.

The Prussian conservatives were dismayed. Even more clearly than their Austrian brethren they perceived the fateful implications of a breach in the hereditary alignment of the three autocracies. Count Otto Bismarck, who was in Vienna at the moment, fumed, in his letters, against "Bach, the ministerial Jews, Hübner, the entire Austrian Bonapartist outfit." In Austria, as in Prussia, he wrote, the issue was one of internal politics. Alliance with Russia would mean the victory of the conservatives at home, but Francis Joseph, it seemed to him, was "egged on by his dislike of the old conservatives into playing the game of the Jews."

The diagnosis was not altogether incorrect—except that once more Bismarck was egged on by his dislike of Bach into calling him a Jew, which he was not. But beyond doubt the Western tendency now gained the upper hand at Vienna. In vain the King of Prussia, suddenly frightened by his rash anti-Russian engagement, warned his nephew to refrain from a rupture.

On June 3 an ultimatum went forth to St. Petersburg, peremptorily demanding the evacuation of the principalities. At the same time an army of 330,000 men was massed on the Transylvanian frontier under General Hess.

II

At first Nicholas simply refused to believe it. The idea that the young Emperor of Austria, whom he had loved and treated as a son, whose throne he had saved but five years ago, should stab him in the back while the French and English were preparing to attack his Empire, appeared to him too monstrous. When he at last understood that the Austrian government meant business his disappointment fairly smothered him. He snatched the bust of Francis Joseph which, a gift of that monarch, was standing on his desk, and gave it to his valet. He said to the Austrian ambassador:

> "Francis Joseph has forgotten what I did for him. If there is a war God will be the judge between me and the Emperor of Austria. The trust that has existed between us for the weal of both our Empires has been destroyed for ever. It can never be restored."

He returned to the subject over and over again. One day he said abruptly to Count Esterhazy: "Do you know who were the two stupidest Kings of Poland?" The ambassador looked puzzled, and Nicholas answered his own query: "John Sobieski and myself." In 1683 John Sobieski drove off, in the eleventh hour, the Turkish army that was besieging Vienna. He was later treated like a dog by the Emperor Leopold I.

For the Czar there was nothing to do but to pay black-

mail—for so he, not unjustified from his point of view, regarded the Austrian demand. With the Austrian army menacing his rear and the British and French contingents landing at Constantinople, Paskievitch before Silistria was in the unenviable position of a nut in a nutcracker. Nicholas ordered the evacuation of the principalities. In a few weeks the last Russian troops had recrossed the Pruth, and Hess's Austrians marched in and settled down in their still warm billets.

This was a notable success, and Count Buol congratulated himself with fervour. "We have the principalities in our pocket," he said, and proceeded to improve upon the good start by entering into an agreement with the Western Powers providing for the exclusion of Russia from the Balkans and protecting the Dardanelles against hostile attack.

The Western party seemed to have won the race, and Hübner was instructed to negotiate a treaty of alliance with France. But by this time the feudal party was up in arms. They were reinforced by Bruck and Hess, who, while opposed to playing second fiddle to Russia, considered that Austrian interests now were sufficiently secured. A sound Austrian policy, they argued, had to assert Austrian independence equally toward West and East. There was no more sense in helping England to ensconce her power in the Eastern Mediterranean than in playing Constantinople into the hands of the Czar. Bruck bitterly attacked Buol for his brusque attitude to Prussia, and reiterated that Austria's safety lay in combining with a strong German Confederation.

Meanwhile in the Crimea the Allies inflicted one defeat after the other upon the Russians, and invested Sebastopol. The Austrians contributed materially to the British-French victories at Alma and Inkerman; for

without firing a single shot—Austria was, nominally, not only at peace with the Czar, but his ally—the menace of Francis Joseph's army tied up two-thirds of Russia's strength along the southwestern border. Owing to Austrian ingratitude, Russia had to defend herself against the invaders with her arms pinned behind her back.

But, if the idle Austrian troops helped the British and French, the latter worked for Buol and Bach. Once more these two controlled the situation in the Hofburg. Buol persuaded the young Emperor that the mere threat of an Austrian alliance with Napoleon and England would coerce Russia into acceptance of the "four points,"[1] and terminate the war. Moreover, argued the Foreign Minister, if Austria joined the Allies at this, the psychological, moment, she could claim as a reward the two Danubian principalities, all the more as she was actually in possession and all that was needed was the sanction of the peace congress.

Bach went even further. This cold-blooded schemer, this unscrupulous *arriviste*, unfolded, once he felt his own position safe, a dreamer, an uplifter, a Utopian at heart. His ever-busy intellect was afire with plans. He already saw Moldavia and Wallachia not only as Austrian provinces, which they were not, but as model provinces, which they were still less.

> "All we have to do," he gushed, "is to restore order, quickly, in those disorganized lands, build roads and railways, start the steamship traffic, and in a little while those regions will constitute a market for our industries, and will supply us with

[1] Incorporated in the agreement between Austria and the Western Allies, concluded on August 8, 1854, and barring Russia from the Balkans and the Dardanelles.

cattle and cereals, and thus repay our original investment."

What a wonderful chance! There was a peasantry, good-natured and industrious, thrifty and fecund and God-fearing, groaning under the yoke of its Boyar masters. Extend to them the benefits of the Austrian statute book—free them from chattel serfdom, give them the land they till in the sweat of their brows, and they will become loyal and enthusiastic subjects, staunch supporters of the Emperor against the particularistic tendencies of the nobles and intellectuals. All this was within Francis Joseph's grasp—all he had to do was to reach out for it.

On October 22 Francis Joseph issued the order of general mobilization. The Western party was jubilant; this meant war. Bach saw himself avenged on the old bully Nicholas and on all his snobbish tormentors the Austrian Russophiles. Did the Russian ambassador Meyendorf say that he only received such Austrian cabinet ministers at his house as were also gentlemen? Well, he will jolly well have to stop his receptions altogether, get his passport and clear out. And Bach saw a Greater Austria extending to the shores of the Black Sea, the Ægean even—an empire well-nigh doubled which he, Alexander Bach, was to make strong, prosperous and happy by his proved system of centralization, Germanization, standardization. And then he will collect his reward—he will be Prime Minister—will be made a Count, a Prince even—who can tell? Count Buol, too, exulted. He saw a cluster of sparkling new decorations—Austrian, French—the Garter, maybe——

A cold shower drenched the daydreamers. Hübner reported from Paris that Napoleon was willing enough

to give the Danubian principalities (which did not belong to him) to Austria—in exchange for the Lombard-Venetian kingdom. That, of course, was not to be thought of. Francis Joseph would never consent to it. A blow! Presently General Hess arrived at Vienna. The Commander-in-Chief of the eastern army had made the trip from the Roumanian wilds in breathless haste. Brave and resolute in battle, he was the timidest and awkwardest of courtiers; his brilliant conceptions wandered flat-footed, lost in the folds of a halting diffident delivery. This time he was almost articulate with anger. A war with Russia! Nonsense! Austria had obtained everything she could desire without war. To attack an old friend and ally—to embark on endless expenditure of men and money—just *pour les beaux yeux* of Napoleon, just to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for that old rascal Palmerston!

On November 21 Francis Joseph revoked the order of general mobilization. Only his faultless manners prevented Count Buol from jumping to the ceiling. Really, this was too impossible. The Emperor of the French was black with rage. What was Austria up to anyway? Hübner telegraphed that the French and British Governments were about to recall their ambassadors from Vienna.

Buol played his trump card. He told Francis Joseph that he had committed himself too far; if he was not allowed to proceed along the line of his obligations he would resign at once. This had been old Count Kolowrat's method with Francis. It had worked with the grandfather; it worked with the grandson. Francis Joseph could not allow his Foreign Minister to back out and leave *him* to manage the mess. Buol won.

On December 2 a treaty of alliance was concluded

between the Austrian Government on the one hand and the French and British Governments on the other. But what a treaty, and what an alliance, it was! It was begot by Compromise out of Procrastination. It provided that unless peace was signed by January 1, 1855, a new agreement was to be negotiated between Austria and the Western Allies, in order to insure "the purpose of the alliance." What this purpose was remained undefined.

The new Austro-French-British alliance soon scored a notable if unexpected result. It killed the Czar Nicholas. The train of misfortunes that befell his empire had crushed the giant body of the autocrat. By New Year, 1855, he was a mere shadow of his former self. He was wrapped in impenetrable gloom. Toward the end of February he contracted pneumonia. On March 2 he was dead. In St. Petersburg everybody said that it was Francis Joseph's ingratitude that finished him. He had acted toward the Emperor of Austria as a father; his word about the parricidal war came literally true.

Russia was now Austria's implacable enemy. But England and France were not her friends. Distrust continued to mark their attitude toward Vienna. "Austria supports us," declared Palmerston in Parliament, "up to a certain point. She supports us," he paused,—"but only morally."

For almost another twelvemonth the war in the Crimean peninsula dragged on. On September 8 Sebastopol fell; France and England, overcoming the immense handicap of a line of communications several thousand miles long, were conquering at last. At this moment the Austrian Government, which up to this time had adhered to an armed aloofness that to the Allies seemed time-serving cowardice and to Russia black treason, chimed in with an ultimatum to St. Petersburg, threatening to break

off diplomatic relations unless the Russian Government yielded. Soon afterward an armistice ended the war.

III

At the Congress of Paris, which convened to negotiate the peace, the Austrian representatives, Buol and Hübner, provoked secret merriment by presenting their sovereign's claim for the cession of the Danubian principalities. A reward? For what? And from whom? Still, the demand had one merit. It brought together the enemies of yesterday. Both sides agreed that Austria was not to have Moldavia and Wallachia. At last Napoleon, in whose mind early sympathies with the cause of Italian freedom were fermenting into ambitious projects, suggested a compromise. Let the Duke of Modena, head of the Habsburg tertiogeniture, [1] cede his duchy to Piedmont-Sardinia and accept as a compensation the two principalities under Austrian protectorate.

This was a very subtle and malicious scheme indeed; but Francis Joseph clearly discerned the pitfalls that lurked behind it. His instructions to Buol bore witness to a coolness and perspicacity of judgment, an insight into motives, and an understanding of the European situation most extraordinary in a young man of twenty-six. The proposed "transfer" of the Duke of Modena, he wrote, would be "the first step toward the rectification of the map of Europe, a process where Austria would have to foot the bill." The union of Moldavia and Wallachia into one state would be no less dangerous; for it would create a Roumanian kingdom which would inevitably stir up nationalistic sentiment among the Roumanian population of the adjoining Austrian prov-

[1] The younger of the two cadet lines of the House of Habsburg. The elder, called secundogeniture, was the grand ducal line of Tuscany.

inces and thus tend to disrupt the Empire. This peril would not be lessened even if the new principality were to elect an Austrian Archduke, other than the Duke of Modena, as its ruler.

> "In any event it would be against our interest," the Emperor went on, "to establish a branch of our House in Roumania. The first Archduke . . . would always remain a good Austrian, but history teaches us that the next generation will always, in similar cases, deny the country of its origin."

Any other Prince on the Roumanian throne would inevitably attach himself to Russia toward which the two provinces naturally gravitate.

There was more in this analysis than the common sense and earnest application which his teachers, from the good Aja onward, had found developed to such remarkable degree in Francis Joseph the baby and the lad. There was in it a firm grasp of historic facts; there was a sound instinct of psychology. And this was the same Francis Joseph who within a single month issued and rescinded an order of general mobilization; who within a single week gave right to Bach and Buol against Hess and Bruck, and then to Hess and Bruck against Bach and Buol; who infuriated both the Czar and the Czar's enemies by hitting out against Russia, but not hitting out hard enough. His shortcomings, then, were obviously those of character, not of judgment. He was incapable of choice; or, rather, he did not see that every act of choosing implies an act of renouncing. It was the fatal myopia of the egotist who reaches to grab everything and also the opposite of everything. It is men like him who prove that understanding is not enough; for a

strong intellect borne by a weak will proceeds to do the wrong knowingly. In adding up the grand total of his long life it availed Francis Joseph little that he had accurately anticipated the case of Roumania by sixty years. It came even as he had predicted. The attractions exercised by united Roumania upon the kindred population of Transylvania became one of the factors which in the end shattered the Austrian Empire. Its first Hohenzollern King, Carol, remained a good German to the end of his days; but his heir Ferdinand denied the country of his origin and attached himself, in the World War, to Russia.

IV

Since the Congress of Vienna the Czar had been the arbiter of Europe. Thanks to Francis Joseph's ingratitude that position now devolved upon the Emperor of the French. Yet the real winner in the Crimean war was not Napoleon III; nor was Russia the real loser. In the history of the great Slav Empire, as in that of France and England, the Crimean war was destined for the rank of a mere episode, a passing unpleasantness which hardly left a mark. It was the seconds, not the principals, whose destinies were deflected by the struggle. Courage, determination, a lightning grasp upon the moment's chance, withal the very virtues which Austrian statesmanship so flagrantly lacked, now brought the little kingdom of Sardinia-Piedmont, under the brilliant guidance of Cavour, to the fore of European politics. The Piedmontese contingent of 15,000 men which that statesman had despatched to assist the French and British at Sebastopol, made little difference to the military status of the Allies; but it placed Napoleon and Palmerston under a direct obligation, and enabled Cavour

formally to moot the problem of Italy as an international issue by lodging with the Congress of Paris a complaint against the conduct of Austria in the peninsula.

On the other hand, the real debit of the balance of the Crimean war fell to the burden of Austria. By sheer indecision, by inability to say No! to insistent or cajoling counsel, her ruler forfeited his powerful and loyal ally, without gaining new friends to replace the loss. He discarded the traditional policy which for over a generation had fixed Austria's place in the European system, and substituted for it, not another set course, but an aimless zigzagging.

So, at least, his conduct must have appeared at close range. In the perspective of history, however, which blurs the accidental and the arbitrary, and brings the substantive and necessary into relief, what Goethe would have called the *Urlinien*, or archelines, of human action become visible under the surface of the merely phenomenal, like rocks on the bottom of the shifting sea to an observer in an airplane. Viewed from this elevation, the senseless swerves of Austrian diplomacy in the Crimean War dovetail into a pattern which appears over and over again in the tissue of the subsequent sixty years. That pattern represents the Francisco-Josephine form of compromise—a compromise which was not the resolution of divergent purposes into a midway course, not the largest common denominator for a variety of concepts, but a fluttering back and forth among disparate lines, a swing to the right corrected immediately by a swing to the left; not an average of different expedients, but a short-winded trial of each; not a golden mean, but a *potpourri*.

That pattern was not new. Indeed, it was but the ancient Habsburg malison—that ghost of half-measures which loomed behind Francis Joseph as he ascended the

throne of his ancestors with a pledge made to break; which on that memorable mid-March night when the sky over Vienna was red with revolt played the grim joke of the two posters proclaiming side by side the gibbet for rebels and the new freedom; which the victor of Aspern vainly sought to exorcise from his sluggish brother the Emperor Francis. It was the spectre that held the hand of the Emperor Rudolf II, philosopher, poet, mystic.

> This is the curse upon our noble house:
> To strive, by doubts beset, toward half-deeds,
> Along half-roads, with half-weapons, half-hearted.[1]

Of the contemporaries who denounced Francis Joseph's betrayal of Russia but few perceived the tragic necessity, the *ἀνάγκη*, that spurred it on. That ancient enemy and *ad hoc* friend, Lord Palmerston, was among the more reserved of critics. "Whether Francis Joseph is perfidious or simply undecided and procrastinating is not for me to say," he remarked. The Prince Schwarzenberg had been less charitable. "*L'Autriche étonnera le monde par son ingratitude*," he had prophesied years ago. He knew his pupil.

V

Those Danubian principalities which Austria was not allowed to keep represented an expensive luxury. The occupation, temporary as it was, and the maintenance of the army on war footing, absorbed huge sums. The treasury had been empty for years; deficits were steadily growing; the bankers refused to lend another penny.

[1] In Grillparzer's tragedy *Bruderzwist in Habsburg:*

> Das ist der Fluch von unserm edlen Haus:
> Auf halben Wegen und zur halben Tat
> Mit halben Mitteln zauderhaft zu streben.

"May God save the Austrian army—the minister of finances cannot," that candid official exclaimed in an after-dinner speech. At last the desperate expedient of a forced loan was resorted to. If gave Bach another chance to display his brilliant gifts as an organizer; his agents carried out the vast work of squeezing the country dry without a hitch; but the proceeds were a drop in the bucket of military expenditure, and in the midst of the crisis the army had to be reduced to the peace establishment.

Perhaps the worst immediate result of the Crimean muddle was that it exposed the fatal weakness of Austrian policy to the whole world in general, and to the statesmen of Prussia in particular. The gains scored by Schwarzenberg's resolute bullying in 1851 were lost overnight. When Count Buol, on his way back from Paris, stopped at Frankfort, he did not call on the members of the diplomatic corps, but sent them word to wait on him. All the envoys came—except the Prussian. His name was Otto von Bismarck. Five years ago, as he read, in his flat in the Gallengasse, the report of his sovereign's humiliation at Olmütz, he swore that he would make Prussia the first power in Germany, whatever the cost. He watched the Austrian Government in its stumbling progress from one blunder to the next. Austria had lost a powerful friend; Prussia had gained one. The new Czar, Alexander II, was not likely to forget that Prussia was the only power which had sided with his father, and by its benevolent neutrality protected Russia in the west. With grim satisfaction Bismarck bided his time. The enemy was working for him. In November, 1855, the Austrian Government instigated a newspaper campaign against the South German kings, denouncing them for their lukewarm attitude in the recent

crisis. Thereupon the King of Württemberg confidentially told Bismarck what he thought of his august ally the Emperor of Austria, and Bismarck, confidentially, reported it to his friend General Gerlach. Francis Joseph, the King had said, was

> "a man of very narrow horizon whose education by Bombelles was jesuitical and superficial; he has learned incredibly little, and his lack of positive knowledge makes him dependent on the judgment of others. He has neglected to sow his wild oats, and since his marriage he has lived only for pleasure, and has shirked business; nevertheless if he were a man of any intellectual gifts Buol could not run Austria the way he does. . . . With Austria you can only deal when she is in misfortune; when she is in luck she is treacherous. . . ."

VI

Francis Joseph could never quite understand why the Czar should have resented his conduct so bitterly. He had written to Nicholas that he could be guided by one consideration only—consideration for the interests of Austria. Was that not self-evident? Surely he could not be expected to subordinate the welfare and security of his own Empire to that of Russia. For him that ended the matter.

In 1857 the St. Petersburg Government put out feelers about the chances of a meeting between Czar Alexander and the Emperor of Austria. Francis Joseph saw the trap at once. They were inviting him to come to Warsaw, but they really meant him to go to Canossa. He was expected to offer an apology; then Alexander would forgive him with a solemn gesture—or anyway, it would look like that. It was out of the question. He

instructed Buol to intimate that he did not want to go—that was easier than refusing a formal invitation.

> "On the whole I think," Francis Joseph wrote to his Foreign Minister, "that everything must be avoided that might bear the remotest resemblance to the acknowledgment of a wrong toward Russia, or an apology. We are under no obligation whatsoever to Russia for the way she"—sent an army to suppress the Hungarian revolution? no, but—"for the way she provoked the Oriental complication and for the plans which she cherished and which were anything but friendly to us."

That was a happy way of putting it. His conscience was clear.

CHAPTER XIII

THE SHOCK

I

THE King of Württemberg's contemptuous remark about the Jesuit influences upon Francis Joseph's education was anything but startlingly original. References to the same subject, only of a much more violent character, were made in the year 1855 and for some time after wherever two or three Austrians were gathered together in the name of the Concordat, as the treaty recently concluded between the Austrian Government and the Holy See was called. By that instrument Francis Joseph renounced part of his sovereignty in favour of the Pope, and made the Church supreme regulator of the most vital and personal concerns of his subjects.

Though always a strict Catholic, Francis Joseph was not exactly a bigot. For one thing, he lacked that emotional surplus which makes the fanatic—whether militant friar or atheist. The Josephine liberal doctrine of state supremacy in matters religious, infused into his upbringing by Colonel Hauslab and the jurist Lichtenfels, was readily assimilated by his innate egotism which saw his imperial self as the only source and standard of authority in the State. The ultramontane antidote administered by Bombelles and Metternich did not turn the hard-headed little secularist into a zealot, but it neutralized

the aggressive edge of the opposed teaching. The rival tendencies merged into a sustained note of discord which time could dampen but could not resolve.

Still, he was a true son of Rome; and the cold ritualistic punctilio which with him did duty for religion implied a regard for the Papacy which was as strong as, if not stronger than, if his Catholicism had been of a more spiritual and transfigured brand. Also, he was a true son of his mother. He neither shared nor understood her perfervid mysticism, but he deferred to her wishes. It was due principally to her urging that in April, 1850, the young Emperor, by a series of new statutes, cancelled most provisions of the Josephine system. The *placetum regium*, which hinged the validity of papal bulls and episcopal decrees on Imperial approval, was abolished; the bishops regained the right to send their communications to the Holy See direct, instead of submitting them to the Government for transmission, and to call upon the secular authority for execution of disciplinary sentences.

Under the influence of Sophie and his former teacher the Cardinal Rauscher Francis Joseph disposed in matters of education, too, invariably in a strict Catholic sense. One of his earliest decrees lifted public worship and the administration of religious foundations from the province of the Department of Interior, that stronghold of Josephinism, and placed them under the jurisdiction of the Department of Education headed at this time by Count Leo Thun, a well-meaning and cultured, but utterly weak and pietistic nobleman. The result of this reform, as could be foreseen, and as, indeed, was intended, was not that the educators gained ascendency over the religious administration, but that the clerical forces conquered the apparatus of public instruction. Three years later the Emperor ordered Count Thun to draw up a report on

the school system, with a special view upon the desirability of restricting academic freedom, a principle which was at once politically unsafe and incompatible with the Catholic character of the colleges and universities.

Throughout the thirteen years of the reign of Ferdinand the Weak the bureaucracy, in which the old Josephine tradition still lingered, successfully combated the attempts of the clerical party to obtain control of the state machinery. The "religious last will and testament" of the Emperor Francis, that fine product of the political philosophy of Metternich and the penmanship of Bishop Wagner, remained a dead letter. Ferdinand's inertia was succeeded by Francis Joseph's egotism in postponing a change which would materially restrict Imperial omnipotence. But the alliance of Sophie and Rauscher, reinforced presently by the conversion of the Minister of Interior, gradually bore down all resistance. A happy accident, too, assisted. The wind that on Simmering Heath swayed the corpse of Libényi the tailor swelled the sails of the crusaders. The Emperor's miraculous escape from death placed him under a direct obligation to Heaven.

His gratitude took two years in maturing; but then it was complete. Sophie's influence, momentarily shaken by the mutinous fervour with which he selected a bride not of her choosing, regained foothold apace with his growing if unconfessed realization of having selected wrongly; and estrangement from the unorthodox Elizabeth drove him into the arms of orthodoxy as represented by the embrace of a vexed but forgiving mother.

On August 18, 1855—it was his twenty-fifth birthday—Francis Joseph signed the Concordat. Sophie, Rauscher, Bach, the entire Catholic party, exulted; and with good reason. The return to the "sacred principles

laid down by the Council of Trident" was sealed. Not only did the Emperor renounce all interference in matters spiritual, but he also ceded an all-important part of his temporal jurisdiction to the Church of Rome by recognizing the Canonic law as law of the realm. Thereby the entire educational system of Austria was turned over to the bishops. So was all legislation affecting matrimony. So was the censorship over books.

A storm of indignation swept the Empire. Not only liberals and agnostics, but also Catholic patriots condemned a measure so obviously contrary to the spirit of the times. The former Governor of Lombardy, Count Hartig—a devoted friend of Metternich's, by the way,—deplored it as "most unfortunate," and reproached Cardinal Rauscher for contriving an agreement which so heavily encroached upon the Emperor's sovereignty. The ex-imperial tutor shrugged his shoulders. "What would you? I am an Archbishop and have acted as such. I represent the Church. The secular authorities consented to everything, and it was their lookout, after all."

If Conservative aristocrats like Hartig were displeased, middle class progressives were desperate. The Concordat was denounced as "a treaty of vassalage which retards for generations the flight of the spirit in its iron grasp." "We have talent for nothing except music and Concordats" scoffed Grillparzer. Still, in a secret, subtle way, the blow was not unwelcome to an essentially un-political race like the Austrians to whom a well-turned epigram always seemed ample compensation for a lost battle. A nation of unconscious political Masochists, they throve on defeat as an excuse for apathy; they were all the happier for a legitimate grievance, which relaxed the necessity of effort.

Thus there vibrated just a shade of gratification, a

caressing sense of a kind of moral insurance against eventual disaster, in the tirades of Austrian liberals which attacked the Concordat as "a letter of renunciation to enlightened Germany." And, indeed, it completed the process begun by Schwarzenberg's insolent ultimatum to the Frankfort Parliament: the process of alienating the progressives of Germany from the cause of Austrian hegemony. It went even further than that, and alienated the Protestant Conservatives of the middle states as well. Once more the Austrian Government played, unwittingly, Prussia's game. But the evil consequences of Francis Joseph's surrender to Rome outlasted even the collapse of Austria's leadership in the German Confederation; for the Concordat was to become the wedge which split the German people of Austria itself, the "state-building" race, into two camps, thus hastening that disintegration which was the beginning of the end.

Among the few to whom the treaty with Rome brought good cheer none was happier than the Prince Metternich. He was in his eighty-sixth year, and still in possession of what he considered full mental, if not physical, vigour; had a flatterer suggested that he was never going to die he would have contradicted him but feebly. He could now but point with pride to the fact that for almost half a century he had advocated the policy which now triumphed. Once more the universe, passingly recalcitrant, remembered its manners and jerked itself into the course prescribed by him. It was, after all, a good world.

II

Those who in the months following Schwarzenberg's death assumed that the position of Alexander Bach had

received the knockout blow—and hope coaxed many a mind into comfortable certainty—were undeceived soon enough. Poor Kübeck was not allowed to rest on his laurels. Toward the end of autumn in the same year his diary once more recorded a change in the Emperor's mood—a change very much for the worse.

The ancient statesman was all the more grieved by this latest gust of imperial inconstancy as Francis Joseph had incurred, and graciously acknowledged, a very grave and personal obligation to him. In March, 1852, the Emperor was about to leave the harbour of Venice at the head of a squadron of five warships when a sudden squall caused the Admiral in command to decline responsibility for the monarch's safety. Thereupon Francis Joseph summoned the five commanders and asked them whether they would get under way were he not on board. The officers, naturally enough, replied that they would carry out orders. For the youth of twenty-two the chance of proving himself a man was too gorgeous to be missed; the resolve which had made the horse-shy boy into a first-class cavalryman now proceeded to bridle the fury of the seas. "Disregard my presence, then," he said. The fleet put to sea; but one of the five vessels, the frigate *Marianne,* was detached by the storm, and was never seen or heard of again. Among those who went down in her was the young Ensign Kübeck. Arriving at Vienna Francis Joseph at once called upon the chagrined father, and in words of, for him, unusual warmth expressed his grief over being the indirect cause of the young man's death. The condolences were repeated, and the loyal old soul was actually comforted by sovereign sympathy.

But now the ties which had been strengthened by that tragic incident were loosened once more. In March,

1853, the Princess Metternich could confide to her diary that "Bach's influence is rising, that of Kübeck waning"; and in April the old man complained to her that the Reichsrath had been altogether shoved into the background, and he no more knew what was going on. Disappointment drained his lingering vitality; for a while he straggled on, too tired, as it were, even to vanish from the scene; in September, 1855, he died defeated and heart-broken at the close of seventy-five years of service and devotion.

Bach's victory was due to a convergence of several causes. Francis Joseph had now been on the throne for five years. He was one of those natures which do not develop very far beyond the initial stages of any relationship or pursuit. His tastes and preferences were set; his stock of fundamental ideas was gathered in, catalogued and labelled. One of these ideas was that government meant administration, and administration meant the expedition of detail. To a monarch holding such a concept of the business of monarchy a man like Bach, with his capacity for organization, his zeal, his industry, his unerring mastery of the *minutiæ* of state stewardship, must have appeared something of a prodigy. Francis Joseph found in Bach some of the virtues which he regarded as the standard equipment of a ruler—for were they not his own virtues?

The alliance which the Minister of Interior had formed with Cardinal Rauscher reached its most intimate phase in the days of the Concordat. Rauscher was an ardent and sincere supporter of centralization; he underwrote Bach, who on his part delivered the bureaucratic machine to the Concordat clique.

This happy union of Cardinal and Minister was benignly smiled upon by *Madame Mère*. Rauscher saved

her son's soul; Bach had saved her son's throne. As to this, no doubt existed in Sophie's mind; and the whole Imperial house agreed with her. Among the honours distributed on the Emperor's wedding was a barony for Bach. The ex-republican chose for his crest the device "*In cruce spes mea.*" Vienna wags translated it with "My hope is Rauscher." On the same occasion the Minister of Interior received a still more substantial acknowledgment. An Imperial decree lifted the state of siege which in several sections of the Empire, including the capital, Vienna, was then completing its fifth year. Bach had persistently urged on this step which extended his power in the same measure as it restricted that of the military authority.

He outlived his greatest enemy and triumphed. Yet, while his position dazzled outsiders, he knew best how insecure and uncomfortable all this glory was. He had sacrificed conviction and pride; but he was expected to repeat those sacrifices daily. To the masses, to his former comrades who despised the renegade in him, he appeared omnipotent; the initiate knew that he trembled whenever the Adjutant-General Grünne or the Minister of Police Kempen was closeted with the Emperor; and they were closeted often and long. Their counsel repeatedly overruled the unanimous representations of the Cabinet.

For the crowning anomaly in this empire of anomalies, where nothing was permanent except the provisional character of everything, where exceptions were the only rules, where priests performed the duties of police and police officers meddled with religion, where a whole governmental department was set up to spy upon another, was that while the doctrine of centralization reigned supreme, there was no central will to direct it. There was no unity of purpose in the Government; there was no

dominating, all-pervading policy. Bach's administrative genius disguised this hiatus, but could not fill it.

At the bottom of this fatal weakness was Francis Joseph's distrust of all men. "I cannot depend on subordinates," his grandfather Francis had said, and the grandson adopted the maxim. His manifest suspicions encouraged rivalries and feuds among his ministers, and the rivalries and feuds nurtured his suspicions. And, as he did not vest his full confidence in any one of his counsellors, he became the victim of all of them. Quick and eager of perception, he lacked intellectual initiative, independence of judgment, withal, imagination. Francis Joseph, aged twelve, had written that the way to solve a problem was to note well what teacher says and then apply the rule. Francis Joseph, aged twenty-five, was faced with a great many problems involving the destinies of a great Empire. He tried his best in carrying out the old precept; but there were too many teachers, and all proposed different rules, and all said that the rules proposed by the others were wrong. What was the little boy dwelling in the majestic outfit of the Emperor of Austria to do? He listened to each teacher in turn, and adopted the rule suggested by each, and discarded the rule suggested by the previous one. Each carried his point by appealing to his suspicion of the other. Here was that fatal discord of the Franciscan régime, as concretized by the duel between Metternich and Kolowrat, revived and multiplied into a whole system of antagonistic pairs: Schwarzenberg vs. Metternich, Kübeck vs. Bach, Bach vs. Kempen, Hess vs. Buol. It was the Austrian, or, more properly, the Francisco-Josephine version of a governmental system of checks and balances; and it secured for the mechanism of the State the regular and consistent motion of a pendulum.

III

He could not trust others; but he at least could trust himself. This was one of the few points on which all the fighting ministers and quarrelling generals agreed. They all appealed to his judgment. A wise Providence, pleased to place the vast responsibility of Empire upon him, saw to it that his shoulders should be equal to the burden.

When he, urged on by Kübeck, decided to become his own Prime Minister, he made up his mind that nothing was going to happen in his domains without his knowledge. He sat at his desk every morning at four and read reports coming in from all corners of the Austrian monarchy. No event was too small or too remote for his attention. People said that no sparrow could fall off a roof in the Empire but that he learned about it. He heard the quip, and regarded it as a compliment.

It was Francis Joseph's omnivorous, insatiable appetite for work, for personal despatch, that ultimately supplied his ministers, above all Bach, with a key to the innermost recesses of power. They made the delicious discovery that they could do exactly as they liked as long as it appeared that they were carrying out their master's orders. As the Emperor insisted on taking the initiative in all matters, the ministers' business was to inspire that initiative.

It was, more or less, the relation between the Emperor Francis and Metternich reversed. That shrewd monarch craved for the reality of power; he was indifferent to appearances, and abhorred the inconvenience of responsibility. He devised the method of pretending that all measures originated with his Chancellor. In the course of time the pretence crystallized into the conviction of a people, and Francis could enjoy his comfort while Metter-

nich was cursed by millions. Comfort was the last consideration with Francis Joseph. To him the semblance of power was as important as its fact. Naturally he could not do everything, decide everything, direct everything; but his ministers could produce the impression as if he did. None succumbed to that impression more eagerly than Francis Joseph himself.

In this one respect at least the teamwork within the Government was perfect. Tacit recognition of common interest evolved a freemasonry of live and let live which muffled factional ardours and jealousies. The method worked in large things and in small. Each Minister had a confidential agent in some strategic position or other within the immediate Household—a physician, a priest, a valet even, whose business it was to drop, as casually as possible, little seeds of big ideas upon the soil of Imperial consciousness. The directing genius, however, of the entire complicated system was the Adjutant-General, Count William Grünne. For concession hunters, for seekers of preferment, for the promoters of all kinds of schemes, it was the established procedure to call on the Adjutant-General first. The latter would usually give the petitioner a letter of introduction to some court dignitary or other whose job it was to arrange an audience with his Majesty.

> "You tell the Emperor what you want," the Count Grünne would instruct the suitor in the broadest Viennese. "The Emperor will at once ask me what I think of it and if he does you are on velvet. I'll tell him that your scheme is grand. But if for some reason or other the Emperor does not mention the matter, don't expect any support from me, for it is my principle never to speak unless I am asked, and I cannot answer questions that the Emperor does not ask, can I?"

Whether it was a matter of proclaiming martial law in a province or purchasing a pack of hounds for the Imperial hunt, the practice was religiously adhered to. The one thing needful was to plant a notion in the sovereign's head. Francis Joseph, impregnable in his conviction that things did not get done unless he did them himself, would usually refer to the matter in the presence of Grünne or the minister concerned. A little dialectics would easily turn a remark into an order. "As Your Majesty commands." A deep bow—the intriguer had his way.

Whatever may be said of the ethics of this stratagem, the underlying psychology was masterful. Nothing could have gratified more an intelligent and active young man whose one passion was work than the consciousness that his will was the motive power which sent the wheels of the entire mechanism of a vast Empire spinning. From this consciousness, as from a hidden spring, flowed that assurance of manner, that serene poise, that natural, undemonstrative authority which so impressed that keen-eyed observer, Leopold, King of the Belgians. Hence that gay and indifferent mien with which the young monarch ignored the sullen inattention of the Viennese crowds. *They* could grumble and gnash their teeth—*he* was Cæsar.

Hence, also, the flashes of anger with which the Emperor punished the slightest allusion to discontent, the merest hint that all was not as it should be in the Empire. As he himself regulated every detail of government, criticism of any detail implied a personal affront. Whenever one of his subjects launched into a complaint about this misuse or that, Francis Joseph, instead of welcoming the opportunity to learn something that he did not know, as Frederick of Prussia or Joseph II would have done,

deadened him into silence with an icy stare that sent shivers down the spine of the haughtiest Duke or the richest banker. This was Schwarzenberg's training, carried on successfully by Grünne no less than by Bach. Grievances, they told the young monarch over and over again, were nothing but malicious gossip; he must not listen to them and be misled, like Louis XVI of France. Once Baron Josika, veteran leader of the ultra-loyal Hungarian conservatives, tried to intimate that the policy of repression was detrimental to Imperial interest. He could utter but a few words when the Emperor cut him short: "You have just been to a bear shoot: tell me about that." Particularly sensitive was Francis Joseph to comment upon the police; if in the course of an audience or a reception anybody ventured the slightest reference to that subject the Emperor immediately turned his back on the tactless creature.

On one of these occasions it happened that the white-haired Cardinal Szcitovszky, Prince Primate of Hungary, a staunch loyalist, attempted to put in a word for his downtrodden country. Francis Joseph called him to order so brusquely that the poor old man broke into tears. The Emperor may have felt that he had gone too far in disciplining one who might be his great-grandfather, for he took the trouble of explaining to his suite, who had witnessed the scene from a distance, that the Cardinal had insulted him.

True inner certainty behooves no such aggressive defences. Was it possible that the poise, the serenity, the graceful strength were but plates of an armour to protect a mind assailed by subconscious doubt? The assumption derives support from the peculiar quality of Francis Joseph's education with its overemphasis on discipline and its neglect of articulation. A better balanced

intellect might have displayed less balance in conduct. The Emperor that seemed, commanded the lieutenant that was, to behave as he was not. The lieutenant carried out orders the best he could, and being an exceptionally efficient lieutenant, that meant a good deal. Still, at moments, he must have lost his nerve; those were the moments when he wrapped around himself the cloak of offended majesty.

And herein lay the Machiavellian superexcellence of the management invented by Schwarzenberg, perfected by Bach, copied by half a dozen others: that it was detection-proof; that it was equipped with automatic blinkers that shut instantly as light fell on them. His ministers encouraged Francis Joseph's childishly literal concept of "*l'état, c'est moi,*" because that concept stood between them and the wrath of an oppressed and victimized people like a wall. But the system was not only self-protecting; it was also self-perpetuating. If every measure expressed a personal wish of the Emperor, every measure *must* be a success. If it was not, it could be, and was, so represented. Trickery as to results was the logical corollary of the trickery as to initiative.

It was by the intensity of his endeavour to be an autocrat just like Grandfather that Francis Joseph fell short of his ambition. He bore the stamp that marks all counterfeit, even the most exact, from the original: the mystic stigma of Purpose. Francis, a real despot, could bully his peoples through Metternich, a comfortable tyrant by proxy, and still walk about beaming like a patriarch and earn the surname Good, an imperial Spenlow at Schönbrunn thwarted in his good works by the grim Jorkins at the Ballplatz. For Francis was smug, but not vain. He entrenched himself behind the pretence of stupidity. When he wanted to dodge a dif-

ficult decision, he would say to a petitioner: "You know, my good man, I ain't clever enough to understand this. You'd better see Metternich." The very vulgarity of his dialect was a business trick, like the green flag sported by the Jewish shopkeeper on Ninth Avenue on St. Patrick's day. Or else: "You may think that I am an ass, I can't help that, for I was born that way; but if I ain't a scholar, I am more than that: I am fair." Of course the exact opposite was true: Francis was just as cunning as he was passionately unfair. Artifices of this kind were utterly alien to the extraverted personality of Francis Joseph. They would have spoiled for him all the zest of Empire.

Soon after his accession he expressed the desire to be kept posted on everything that was going on in the world. Out of various methods of purveying all-round information gradually a curious routine evolved. The Minister of Police took upon himself the special duty of clipping, from newspapers in practically all European languages, such articles as he thought that the Emperor ought to read. The cuttings were then pasted together on sheets, and placed on the Emperor's night-table. Every evening, before he fell asleep, Francis Joseph picked up this synthetic journal, and he was escorted into the world of dreams by a picture of the world of reality, as arranged by the scissors of Lieutenant-General the Baron Johann Kempen von Fichtenstamm.

IV

In no phase of his government did Francis Joseph take keener interest than in the administration of the Italian provinces. The amount and variety of information that he absorbed from this quarter was prodigious. He was

acquainted with all the intricacies and ramifications of the nationalist conspiracies; he knew by heart just what members of what noble Lombard families were involved in them, where their property consequently confiscated was situated, and what it was worth. If the university of Pavia had to be transferred because of anti-Austrian excesses, Francis Joseph knew not only that Mantua was the best place to transfer it to, but also that the Invalids' Home in that town offered most convenient quarters. When recruiting officials in certain Lombard villages pocketed the exemption monies and then levied the conscripts who had bought themselves off, Francis Joseph was accurately informed, and ordered exemplary punishment of the offenders; when in Brescia and other cities actresses and noblewomen were publicly flogged for singing patriotic songs in a restaurant Francis Joseph expressed his satisfaction over the efficiency of military justice; when the tricolour of United Italy was found flying from the black-and-yellow flagstaff in front of St. Mark's at Venice, Francis Joseph scolded the Governor-General and inquired how the rebellious rag could be run up under the very noses of the sentries in the gaslit square, and why it was hauled down so late. Irrigation schemes were submitted for his approval no less than death warrants for conspirators and plans for the erection of new railway stations.

What Francis Joseph could not understand was why the people of Italy showed so little appreciation of his paternal care. That the Austrian administration in Lombardy and Venetia was better—more efficient and more honest—than that of the other Italian states was admitted even by Italians; it was attested by the phenomenal prosperity of the provinces themselves. And yet the population seethed with discontent. The life of no

Austrian officer and sentry was safe; in some secret underground way the disloyalists contrived to maintain communications with the rebel centres abroad—at Turin, in Switzerland, in London, and conducted a campaign of violent slander in the French and British press; conspiracy succeeded to conspiracy, and rebellion to rebellion. Such perverse ingratitude admitted one explanation only. Wicked agitators, financed by foreign gold, were at work and stirred up the people which but for their nefarious activities would have lived in contentment and obeyed its masters. There was one way, and one only, to extirpate the evil: the ancient proved way of constituting examples. Under the martial law by which the two provinces were governed from 1848 to 1854 floggings and long prison terms were part of the everyday routine of administration, while the discovery of conspiracies was regularly accompanied by a spell of hangings. The five days' rebellion at Milan, in February, 1853, was drowned in blood. At times the military authorities themselves felt qualms about the ruthlessness which they were expected to display. In 1852 a delegation, led by the Bishop of Mantua and consisting of leading citizens, waited on General Benedek, chief of staff to the Governor-General, and begged for remission of the death sentences passed upon Tazzoli and his four comrades, participants of a nationalist plot. After listening to the Bishop's plea Benedek dismissed them with the words: "Give me your hand and let us part as friends, for I shall not oppose your wishes." The Mantuans then called on the Governor-General; and old Radetzky, a stern but not inhuman soldier, seized the Bishop's hand and exclaimed: "I can do nothing, the power of pardon is not in my hands, I have to obey to higher, irrevocable decisions." In Italy the "higher" was translated with Francis Joseph,

and the "irrevocable" with Adjutant-General Grünne; Tazzoli and his friends died on the gallows.

One of the most embittering aspects of Austrian despotism was that the Italians were made to pay for their own fetters, not only through heavy taxes, but also by huge fines, levied by the courts-martial on the slightest pretexts, on individuals, families and towns, and amounting, in many cases, to wholesale confiscation of property. In 1853 an Imperial decree provided for the sequestration, without judicial proceedings, of the property of 978 Lombard noble families whose members had been involved in patriotic plots. In reality the whole guilt of a large proportion of those thus expropriated consisted in residing in Piedmont, the centre of the movement for Italian union. The measure led to a diplomatic breach between the governments of Vienna and Turin. It was on this occasion that Austrian diplomacy crossed swords for the first time with the new Piedmontese Foreign Minister, Count Cavour, whose vigorous stand was heartily applauded by British and French public opinion.

Gradually the failure of the policy of coercion dawned on the Austrian Government, and the inauguration of a milder régime was resolved upon. In 1857 the Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief Field Marshal Radetzky, ninety-one years old, retired. The military administration of the provinces now was to be replaced by civilian authority, and as an especial sign of his favour the Emperor appointed his brother, the Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian, as Viceroy. Soon afterward the Emperor visited the provinces in person. His sojourn was to seal the reconciliation between the government and the people of Lombardy-Venetia. An amnesty for political offences was proclaimed, and much of the confiscated property was restored. Everywhere the Emperor passed

through triumphal arches, between rows of cheering subjects, along beflagged and garlanded streets. White-clad virgins handed him bouquets. Nobody handed him the bills for these made-to-order ovations. His heart was deeply touched. He said to the mayor of Milan: "I have forgotten the past."

Even some of the more clear-sighted men of the Imperial entourage were deceived into believing that the heart of the Italians was won at last. But one, at any rate, had no such delusions. General Mollinary wondered at the gullibility of his colleagues. "The trouble was that those in authority lacked adequate appreciation of the power of ideas," he wrote.

As far as Francis Joseph was concerned this was clearly an understatement. The trouble with him was, not that he underrated the force inherent in ideas, but that he ignored their existence. He did not know that the Italian national movement expressed the will of a great people to fulfill its historic destiny. He honestly believed that it was the result of the intrigues of a few vicious men, and a proof of the knavery of the broad masses. He honestly believed that Mazzini was a common criminal, and that the Risorgimento could be disposed of by the police.

The delusion induced by those stage-managed cheers was soon dispelled by noises of a different, more natural *timbre*. The tide of anti-Austrian sentiment surged higher than ever. It could not be stemmed by the efforts of the generous Archduke Maximilian to inject a liberal spirit into the new civilian administration and to grant the Lombards an increasing share in the management of their affairs. A generation earlier a succession of enlightened Austrian governors—Bellegarde, Hartig, Call—urged upon the Vienna court this policy of home rule gradually extended, but their pleas were not heard. The

opportunity was missed. The truth of Napoleon's cruel quip—"The Habsburgs are always too late—either with an army or with an idea,"—pursued the archiducal reformer. His attempts to placate the haughty Lombard nobility by social amenities were no less futile. He gave gorgeous parties and invited fashionable Milan. Nobody came. He attended public functions. The nobles stayed at home. They even cut him, the Viceroy, the Emperor's brother, in the street.

Francis Joseph felt a bitter satisfaction. He had never really believed in a policy of concessions. He had never trusted the Italians. And he had never trusted his brother Max. He held that the peoples in general and the Italians in particular were thoroughly bad. He knew that his brother was a sentimentalist; he knew that he was self-seeking and incompetent. Wasn't it curious how history repeated itself? His grandfather Francis had had this same sort of trouble with his own brother John. The latter, just like Maximilian, played himself up as a liberal and coquetted with the people; he urged all kinds of reforms, and sought to ingratiate himself with the Tyrolese as Max was now doing with the Italians; and it appeared later that he had had his own private selfish designs. Wasn't it reasonable to assume that Max had *his* too? Francis Joseph reprimanded his brother. At the same time he commanded him to stir up the police and to rouse the courts. The latter, the Emperor complained, "have all of a sudden refused to pull. It is really a scandal the way these fellows" (meaning the judges) "slacken down the moment things are headed toward a crisis."

V

An imperial colleague took a different view of the developments in Italy. Napoleon III, who rode into

power in the saddle of a popular upheaval, entrenched reaction at home, but continued to exploit revolution abroad. As a student of history he knew that his great namesake and predecessor had failed because he took no account of the idea of nationalism and used the peoples as mere pawns in the game for Empire. The "nephew as uncle" decided that he would play his inferior hand better, and harness the power that had destroyed the first Napoleon.

Francis Joseph was quite right when he, at the time of the Congress of Paris, suspected the Emperor of the French of designs to rectify the map of Europe at the expense of Austria. When a year later Bismarck visited Paris Napoleon spoke to him freely about his intention to assist the Italians in throwing off Austrian rule. Bismarck chuckled to himself. The French sovereign, too, was playing *his* game.

Italian resentment and enthusiasm, Austrian blunders, and French ambitions were the clay which that past master of statecraft, Count Cavour, was moulding into the shape of his designs. His genius had already secured for the little kingdom of Sardinia-Piedmont a place in the European system which was quite out of proportion with its resources. Patriots in all Italian states—in Lombardy-Venetia as well as in the Papal domains, in the middle duchies and in Bourbon-ridden Naples—looked toward Piedmont for the achievement of the great dream of Italian unity. But if the events moved too fast for Austrian perception, they moved much too slowly for Italian hopes. In his dim remote youth, so full of queer picaresque detail, the Emperor of the French had been, among other things, a member of the Italian secret organization of the Charcoal-Burners, and had pledged his life to the work of liberation. His

brethren-Carbonari now thought that a little reminder of that pledge would not be amiss. The hint was conveyed in the peculiarly delicate manner for which the society was rightly celebrated. On a charming January day of 1858 its emissary, the Count Felix Orsini, hurled a bomb into the Imperial carriage. Napoleon escaped unhurt, but the allusion went home. The Emperor decided that something had to be done for the Italians. A few months later he met Cavour at Plombières, a health resort in the Vosges, where the patient, Italy, was to undergo a cure under the guidance of those two specialists. A treaty of alliance was drawn up and signed; a French army was to assist Piedmont against Austria; the very details of the campaign were agreed upon.

New Year's Day, 1859, brought the explosion of another bomb—this time a diplomatic one. At the reception of ambassadors Napoleon brusquely addressed the Austrian minister, Hübner: "I regret that our relations to your Government are not as good as they used to be."

All Europe resounded with that remark. It was a bugle call to battle. Italy went into a trance. The British Foreign Secretary, Lord Malmesbury, noted in his diary that Napoleon was obviously scared for his life. A few days after that historic insult in the Tuileries the King of Sardinia, addressing Parliament from the throne, declared that "shrieks of pain" had penetrated to him from all Italy and did not fall on deaf ears. The Piedmontese army mobilized. The French army did likewise. Garibaldi raised volunteers.

War seemed inevitable when the British Government intervened to save peace. Public opinion in England wished Piedmond Godspeed; but the Queen's sympathies

were with Austria as the champion of legitimacy, and she held that England ought to have a voice in the Italian settlement. Her Foreign Secretary (thank God, it was not the abominable Lord Palmerston this time, but the pleasant Lord Malmesbury) proposed disarmament pending a European conference. Russia seconded the move. Napoleon wavered, then fell into line. He advised Cavour to disarm. There was much gnashing of teeth at Turin; for the treaty of alliance provided that Napoleon's aid was due only if Austria attacked.

VI

Lieutenant-General the Count William Grünne, Aide-de-Camp-General to the Emperor Francis Joseph, had won the laurels of an exceptionally brilliant military career as a sure-footed negotiator of the slippery expanses of parquet floor in the Vienna Hofburg. He had served in diverse cavalry regiments, where he distinguished himself chiefly by his quiet unpretentious mastery of the problems inherent in quantities of champagne, and the precise speed with which his manners of a dancing-master changed into those of a beer-house bully according to whether he was addressing a superior or a subordinate. He was a young colonel of thirty-five when in 1843 he was summoned into Court service and assigned as Master of the Household to the Archduke Stephen, Palatine of Hungary. In this post he scored his greatest success by tactfully resigning as soon as he saw that the Archduke was involving himself too closely with the Magyar liberals. He applied for a commission in the army of Radetzky in Italy. The transfer was already gazetted, but Grünne was spared the discomforts of a summer campaign in the hot Lombard lowlands. Before he started out to the front he was appointed Master of the

Household to the Archduke Francis Joseph. That was in August, 1848. On December 2 of the same year the Archduke was proclaimed Emperor. Grünne's fortunes skyrocketed. He was made Adjutant-General and head of the Military Cabinet. After Schwarzenberg's death he became the most powerful man in the Empire—more powerful than Bach, more powerful than Kübeck, sharing his predominance only with the Cardinal Rauscher and, to a lesser extent, with the Police Minister, Kempen, but having the advantage over both of continuous attendance on the Emperor.

Contemporaries wondered. What was the secret of Grünne's hold? The sway of men like Schwarzenberg or Rauscher or Bach was intelligible; they were, if not exactly great men, at any rate men of exceptional talent and personality. They dazzled. There was nothing dazzling about Grünne. His natural gifts were indifferent; his knowledge of military theory negligible; his actual experience of warfare nil. He did not measure up even to the standards of mediocrity set by men like Buol or the Krauss brothers, whose appointment foreshadowed the approaching maturity of a ruler shrewd enough to know his own limitations and vain enough to ban those who exceeded them. If his accomplishments were below the average, his character was worse. Grovelling before his superiors, he was brutal to those he had no reason to fear; he was frivolous, jealous, and vindictive. But he was, in the crude way of the Austrian regimental mess, a good talker, sharp and mean at repartee, sophisticated in that purely external sense which is not incompatible with dulness.

What did this rough and unattractive soldier who lacked every finer quality of mind and spirit, whose very smartness sat but skin-deep, offer to an alert and critical

young man like Francis Joseph? He offered him an escape. His brilliant advisers—the passionate Schwarzenberg, the eloquent Rauscher, the philosophical Kübeck, serious old men whose youngest might have been his father—overtaxed him. He listened to them; he understood what they said, and responded readily. But they were too much for him; they were not his kind. Grünne was. What a relief, after a learned disquisition of Kübeck's, heavy with moralistic maxims, or a report of Bach's, bristling with statistics and superfine legalisms, to have a hearty laugh over a good coarse barrack-room story or a spicy bit of society scandal dished up by the Adjutant-General! Grünne, himself the eternal subaltern, was the only man in his entourage who addressed, not the Emperor, but the lieutenant of dragoons. He was a jolly good fellow, that's what Grünne was!

At least so he seemed to his master. In the army, outside of a narrow circle of personal favourites, they hated and despised him as an upstart, a snob, and a slave-driver. He was utterly devoid of that *esprit de corps* which sometimes redeemed, at least in the eyes of his comrades, even the roughest swashbuckler. Once a deputation of officers presented him with a petition complaining that a second lieutenant could not possibly live on his allowance of 24 florins (about eight dollars) a month, fixed half a century ago. "For twenty-four florins a month I can get as many lieutenants as I want," Grünne replied in the best manner of the sweatshop proprietor.

Well aware of his limitations, the Adjutant-General hated and persecuted all who were intellectually his superiors. Above everything he hated the "bookmen," officers of high scientific education like General Hess. Nor was this the antagonism of the officer of the line to the theorist; for Grünne had never smelt gunpowder in

real action, and was despised no less by the fighting personnel than by the specialists of the general staff. When General Schlick, who had won great distinction as a cavalry leader in the Hungarian campaign, once encountered Grünne in the Emperor's anteroom, the latter remarked condescendingly: "I have heard much of Count Schlick." "I daresay you have—but the army has heard nothing of Count Grünne," the General answered haughtily. Grünne's revenge was characteristic. Schlick got entangled in debts, and the Emperor, in recognition of his services, assigned 200,000 florins from the privy purse to his relief. Grünne, however, blocked the order, and payment was held up for several years. One day Schlick called him to account, and in the course of altercation hit him a full blow in the face. There was no sequel, as Grünne thought it wiser to hush up the row; but the story went broadcast, and all over the empire officers drank Schlick's health.

The old Field Marshal Radetzky himself shared the general opinion about Grünne's character and abilities, and sought to check his influence by having General Hess appointed Quartermaster-General, as the chief of the imperial general staff was then called. Hess was a first-rate strategist, a gallant fighter, and a man of sterling honour. He had acted as Radetzky's chief of staff, and the generous old Field Marshal made no bones about owing the victories of 1848–49 very largely to Hess's plans. At court, however, Hess was no match for Grünne. He was extremely shy; his manners were impossible; he had, moreover, no particular family connections, while the Adjutant-General, whose principal strategic victory on record was the capture of the wealthy Countess Trautmannsdorff for a wife, was closely related to half a dozen of the leading Austrian clans. It was an

uneven race, won easily by plausible wire-pulling against clumsy worth. Hess found all doors to the inner circle of imperial intimacy bolted. During the Crimean crisis his counsel, supported by Bruck and by Francis Joseph's diffidence of the others, periodically prevailed; after 1855 he was relegated to the background.

Though propelled by motives of an entirely different order, Grünne paralleled Kübeck's policy in regard to the Ministry by persuading the young Emperor to abolish the War Department and replace it with a Supreme Army Command. While Kübeck had advised the Emperor not to appoint a Prime Minister and concentrate all power in his own hands because he held that that was the best course for the Empire, Grünne induced him not to appoint a Minister of War and assume direct charge of army administration because he held that that was the best course for Grünne. The Emperor was Commander-in-Chief; but actually under the new dispensation the office of the Adjutant-General had absolute control. Grünne abused his discretion for installing the grossest brand of favouritism and for waging war on the "bookworms," as he contemptuously called all officers of a superior education. And, as by a kind of mystic Gresham law applying to corporate morale, the spirit of Grünne succeeded in driving out, within a few years, whatever was best in the tradition of the Austrian army. Honour, self-respect, independent thought, all higher endeavour were suppressed; the roughest practices were revived in the treatment of enlisted men; parade drills were regarded as the supreme end of military service. In Austrian military history the decade between 1850 and '60 is known as the "era of bullying colonels." Toward the end of 1858 General Mollinary, who attended grand manœuvres in Lombardy, was horrified to see

what had become of Radetzky's splendid army. "If we now get embroiled in a war with the French, we'll be sure to be licked," he confided sadly to a comrade.

If Grünne was unpopular in the army, he was hated like the fiend by the people. When in the fifties Austrians spoke of the sinister tyranny of an invisible government, they had the Archduchess Sophie and Count Grünne in mind. The very reports of the secret police mirrored the abomination in which he was held.

> "There have been," one of these papers read, "repeated outbreaks, increasingly violent, of the general embitterment against Count Grünne and his conduct. Popular disgust with this highly placed gentleman vents itself in statements such as, 'The Emperor ought to learn at last how arbitrary, wilful and rough Count Grünne's ways are, and how, by his disloyal behaviour, he alienates the warmest sympathies for the Dynasty.'"

Such sentiments were common to the military, to members of the aristocracy, even to the officials and servants of the Court; they found the most vehement expression in the Adjutant-General's immediate environment.

> "The public feels," so the report concludes, "that their Excellencies the Ministers are well aware of and deplore all this, but are unable to dissuade His Majesty from his views."

Thus wrote a faithful and intelligent organ of the imperial secret police on the twenty-third of December, 1850, of the man whose hold upon the Emperor Francis Joseph was more potent than that of any adviser, military or civilian, before or after him. In the decade that followed Grünne's domination steadily increased. By the

spring of 1859, when Austrian power in Italy was faced with the final challenge, there was no one to challenge the power of Lieutenant-General Count William Grünne in the imperial secret cabinet at Vienna.

VII

Napoleon's retreat baffled Cavour. Piedmont could not fight Austria single-handed; and French support, so he was reminded, was pledged only for a defensive, but not an offensive, war. Once more the prospects of freeing Lombardy and Venetia from the foreign yoke receded into an uncertain future. From this impasse the Turin Government was rescued by an unexpected benefactor.

On April 23, the Emperor Francis Joseph addressed an ultimatum to Piedmont, demanding, under the threat of armed invasion, demobilization within three days. Cavour's difficulty was solved. He did not demobilize. On April 27 Austria declared war. At last the *casus fœderis* had set in; Napoleon was now obliged to help.

No one was more painfully surprised and shocked by the Austrian ultimatum than the Austrian Foreign Minister, Count Buol. He had known nothing about it. The note had been despatched over his head by the Emperor's military cabinet—that is to say, by Count Grünne. Behind him, directing his arm, as it were, loomed the dark tense figure of Cardinal Rauscher. The Piedmontese menaced the temporal power of the Pope; now was the time, so the Catholic party in Austria considered, to crush them once for all.

Poor Buol was disconsolate. His pride, his sense of the proprieties, were mortally hurt. Who ever heard of a monarch declaring war behind his Foreign Minister's back? He tendered his resignation. Francis Joseph, after consulting the Prince Metternich, accepted.

The rash arrogance of the Austrian policy could only be redeemed by rapid success in the field. But such success presupposed brilliant leadership and efficient organization. Now, in General Hess, Radetzky's brilliant adjunct, the Austrian army possessed a first-rate commander. But Count Grünne was not going to spoil his fun—after all, wasn't it his own war?—by countenancing the elevation of his enemy. Instead of Hess, the army's unanimous choice, one of Grünne's creatures, General Count Gyulai, a cut-and-dried nonentity, was appointed to command. The best that could be said for him was that he realized his own insufficiency, and accepted the post only when finally Grünne overruled his scruples. "What Radetzky, that old jackass, managed to put over, you will be able to put over too," the Adjutant-General assured his friend.

The Adjutant-General was wrong. Within forty-eight hours of the declaration of war Gyulai crossed the Ticino and overran Piedmontese territory. He had 100,000 men; the King of Sardinia had no more than 50,000; the French divisions were still plodding along in the Alpine passes. By one swift blow the Austrian generalissimo might have crushed the enemy and ended the war. Actually, the Piedmontese thought that all was lost; Turin itself prepared for capture. What the Piedmontese did not know was that Grünne's protégé was more afraid of them than they of him. For a month he sat idly in the Quadrilateral,[1] allowing Napoleon all the time he needed to deploy his forces into the Piedmontese plain.

But the impotence of leadership was only one symptom of the general decay into which the Austrian fight-

[1] The four fortresses Verona, Legnago, Mantua and Peschiera in Venetia, held to be impregnable.

ing machine had fallen. Disorganization was rampant in all departments. Half of the regiments consisted of raw conscripts. The arsenals and storehouses were empty. The Minister of Finance had no money. The Archduke Albrecht, son of the victor of Aspern, commander-in-chief of the home forces, reported to the Emperor Francis Joseph, who had proceeded to the front, that whole regiments had to be equipped with obsolete flint guns; others could be supplied with a more up-to-date model, but with no ammunition to match; some battalions entrained without a single overcoat, and others without boots. Albrecht was an excellent soldier and gifted organizer. On June 5—six weeks after the outbreak of hostilities—he reported to the sovereign that by October he would have four new army corps ready to take the field.

By October! The Archduke did not know that as he penned that promise the Austrian army was already in full retreat. On the day before the French, who had outflanked the Austrian right wing, attacked at Magenta and won after a fierce struggle. Thereupon Gyulai evacuated Lombardy and once more took up his position in his favourite Quadrilateral.

The Emperor Francis Joseph himself now assumed the supreme command, and Hess was appointed chief of staff. But it was too late—too late once more. Even had he been granted full powers he could not have now, in the eleventh hour, undone all the sins and mistakes of a decade. As a matter of fact, however, his authority was but nominal, and the commanders of the different armies had still to submit all dispositions to Grünne, who teased and slighted his rival on every turn.

At three o'clock in the morning of June 24 the French attacked the Austrian left wing at Medole, and at six

The Emperor Francis Joseph at the Centenary of the Order of Maria Theresa (the Austrian V. C.) at Schönbrunn, June 15, 1857

Painting by l'Allemand

The Emperor Francis Joseph in the Battle of Solferino

o'clock they occupied the village. It was characteristic of the Austrian inefficiency that it took six hours for the news of the attack to reach Imperial headquarters at Solferino, situated at sixty minutes' riding distance. Muddle stamped the rest of that fateful day—incompetent generalship wasting the heroism of the fighting rank and file. General Wimpffen, in command of the left wing, on whom the day's chief burden fell, was one of those Austrian generals who, in the words of Suvarov, were hopelessly addicted to the habit of getting beaten. Twice he received orders to attack; twice he failed to move, and at 2 P.M. he reported to the Emperor that he had to retreat, as all attempts at advance had been futile.

Wimpffen's dereliction loosened disaster upon the centre where the troops of General Count Stadion, though exhausted by the terrific heat, had resisted the French until the last round of ammunition was fired. A division under Count Clam-Gallas, consisting of Hungarian regiments, was sent to relieve them. Just then the French Imperial Guards charged; and the Hungarians, feeling little inclined to shed their blood for the oppressor of their country, ran at the first impact. Napoleon's Guards thus pierced the Austrian centre, and Francis Joseph issued the order to retreat. At this moment General Wimpffen on the left wing suddenly awoke to the fact that he had been expected to attack. He advanced, about half a day too late, as the centre was already being pressed back. This completed the confusion, and what began as retreat ended as flight.

On the right wing alone the Austrians held their own. Here General Benedek repulsed three attacks of the Piedmontese army, inflicting heavy losses, and withdrew only when the retreat of the Austrian centre was

broken into a run. Even then he carried all his prisoners and his wounded with him. As the Austrian centre—by now a seething disorganized mass—was sweeping back across the bridge of the Mincio the fate of Italy was settled.

That indecision which characterized Francis Joseph's diplomacy entered into his conduct of the Battle of Solferino, too. Hess, as the loss of the day seemed inevitable, advised the Emperor immediate withdrawal into the Quadrilateral. Francis Joseph complied, and large contingents had already crossed the Mincio when the sub-chief of staff, Ramming, prevailed upon the monarch to reverse the order and attack again. The troops were hurried back, and the battle recommenced. These phases were repeated as once more Hess's counsel prevailed, only to be thwarted in a little while by the counter-argument of Ramming; until the rout of the centre rendered further wavering impossible. The typical Habsburg fate pursued Francis Joseph's generalship; to be forced, in the end, by bitter necessity to do that which he might have done before by choice, with better grace and to better purpose.

Still the war was not absolutely lost. Napoleon's casualties were no less heavy than those of the defeated Austrians, and an attack on the Quadrilateral, the strongest complex of fortifications in Europe, was a dangerous business. Moreover, in Germany public opinion began to demand that the Confederation should go to Austria's aid. Prussia mobilized. A flank attack on the Rhine would have placed Napoleon in a most uncomfortable position.

Had that devoted friend of Austria, the old King Frederick William, still been holding the reins of government the assistance of the *Bund* would probably have

materialized. But Francis Joseph's "most faithful vassal" had in the meantime been disabled by that mental derangement of which his romantic escapades into medieval terminology were but early symptoms; and the Regent, the Prince of Prussia, was made of harder stuff. He stated his price for Prussian intervention: supreme command on the Rhine and a share in the presidency of the Confederation.

That price seemed too high to Francis Joseph. Rather than grant those concessions to the rival, he would acknowledge defeat to the enemy, and take the consequences. Besides, he felt that his own resources disallowed continuation of the war. Of the twelve Austrian army corps nine were already concentrated in Italy; two were about to start for the front, and the twelfth was needed to keep Hungary down. And from Vienna and other cities came strange and disquieting reports concerning the attitude of the population.

Napoleon's initiative prodded his decision. The Emperor of the French proposed an armistice. On July 11th the two sovereigns met at Villafranca, about ten miles southwest of Verona. Fifty-four years earlier another defeated Habsburg met the triumphant Bonaparte on the plain of Austerlitz; and the proud Roman Emperor Francis, descendant of twenty generations of Cæsars, raised his hat first to the son of the lawyer of Ajaccio. Was his grandfather's encounter present in the mind of Francis Joseph as he faced the first Napoleon's nephew in the parlour of the lowly Italian village inn? The interview lasted two hours; at the end Francis Joseph signed the preliminary treaty. The Emperor of the French was greatly impressed by his cool dignity; but the Prince Jerôme Napoleon, who a few days earlier had presented the draft to him at Verona, later

related that the Emperor of Austria wept as he read the conditions.

Francis Joseph bought himself peace at the price of Lombardy. He renounced the richest province of his Empire, which had cost, not him, but his peoples, so much blood, in favour of Napoleon, who immediately turned it over to the King of Sardinia. Therewith Austrian hegemony in Italy came to an end. Venetia still remained in Habsburg possession; but all Italy, and all Europe, felt that it was not to remain there very long.

What disturbed Francis Joseph more than his loss was the news from home. All over the Austrian Empire the peoples rejoiced in the disaster of Austrian arms. After Magenta, after Solferino, the Viennese cheered Napoleon and Victor Emmanuel. The Hungarian regiments of Count Clam-Gallas who fled from the cold steel of the French Guards were not the only unreliables.

VIII

Since the days of Francis fixing the responsibility for defeat was one of the most important functions of governmental routine in Austria. Grumbling constitutionalists may have blamed for Solferino the decade of despotism that preceded it and destroyed the people's solidarity with the dynasty even to the extent of making the victorious enemy appear as liberator. Francis Joseph, for a moment dazed by the blow, recovered his balance by grabbing the atavistic precept of seeking out and punishing guilty individuals. In the particular emergency the hunt for scapegoats was, indeed, the given course; for on all sides bitter accusations of graft were raised. It was far better to attribute the paralysis of the army to awful abuses in the supply department at home than to impotence at G. H. Q. Consequently the charges of

corruption were officially encouraged, and a number of commissariat officials and army contractors were imprisoned. One of the incriminated officers, General von Eynatten, hanged himself in his cell; and there were ugly whispers about the official courtesy which promoted his suicide rather too eagerly.

He was not the only, nor the most eminent, victim. Among those accused of illegally enriching themselves by the plight of the Empire was the Minister of Finances, Baron Bruck. He was summoned to the Emperor, who severely reprimanded him. At home, Bruck found an Imperial rescript on his desk. It contained a summary dismissal. Thereupon he cut his throat with a razor. Thus died one of the finest of Austrian statesmen, "the noblest fool that ever served the Habsburgs," as a contemporary put it. Before long his innocence was fully established.

Nemesis overtook Count Grünne too. He was dismissed from the Adjutancy-General. For the next sixteen years he eked out a miserable existence as His Majesty's Master of the Horse. In 1875 he retired from Court and spent the rest of his days on his wife's estates.

CHAPTER XIV

THE BROTHER

I

On the sixteenth day of May, in the year 1839, the Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian visited an exhibition of paintings. In the evening he discussed his experiences with the Baroness Sturmfeder, and observed that he liked best of all a certain picture by Herr Dullinger, priced 300 florins. "That is a great deal," opined the prudent Baroness. "Nobody will buy it." "Well, if nobody will, I shall," flashed the generous Prince. "But how? You have no money." "Yes, I have. I have got 120 florins. I shall pay that down, and the balance in instalments." He had an inspiration. "I shall ask Mamma for a Christmas tree with a ten-florin note pinned to each branch."

His elder brother, the Archduke Francis Joseph, listened with a superior smile. He, too, had seen the exhibition. He opened fire. "What do you know about paintings?" "At least as much as you." "Is that so?" He quizzed Maximilian in the manner of a particularly aggressive professor at an examination. "It was pretty," the good Baroness concluded her day's entry, "to behold Franzi's triumph whenever he caught Max by a captious query."

The Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian, second son of the Heir-Presumptive, Archduke Francis Charles, was

seven years old then. His brother, the future Emperor of Austria, was nine. Subdued violins of the orchestra of fate struck up a theme, thin and slight like the voice of children, from which was to grow the tragic fugato of an Imperial life.

II

Maximilian had come into this world two years later than his brother, Francis Joseph. That meant, to him, two years too late. His whole life was to be a race against this handicap. A hopeless race. He arrived everywhere a bad second behind the first-born and heir.

He arrived a bad second in the affections of their nurse, the Baroness Sturmfeder. The kindly old maid had lost her heart to Franzi; she frowned upon the poor innocent second baby as upon an interloper, though she was ashamed of her frown. Max was hardly more than three years old when he realized that he was struggling against odds. Defeated passion spoke with the voice of a little child: "Amie, you know, I love you just as much as you love Franzi." He retreated with his hurt behind a defence built of "ifs," variations of a basic "If Amie loved me as she loves Franzi I would . . ." do whatever was expected of him at the moment. Thus a ground-note of evasion was struck, with feminine overtones reinforced by the boy's extraordinary, though somewhat soft, beauty, and delicate constitution; inactivity was excused, speculation was encouraged. By and by his tenderness overcame the Aja's jealousy; as he discovered the art of abstraction, he translated his experience into the idea, "I can conquer by love." Instantly he held it up as a reproach against the older boy whose weapon was hardness.

He approached life in the conditional mood, as it were, in contrast to Francis Joseph's indicative; and he

found his approach blocked by the wall of those two years. That wall he could not scale; he had to learn to soar. "I must be better, I must be greater, than Franzi—and I shall be." For that end, whatever Franzi was, was degraded; difference was striven for; the opposite was exalted. Franzi was industrious, realistic, methodical; Maximilian grew spasmodic, dreamy, impatient with detail. Franzi proceeded step by step along a concrete road of facts; Maximilian swept ages by winged fancy. Franzi toiled away at moment-bound tasks; Maximilian plotted bold timeless schemes.

The boys grew up. Francis Joseph, like his grandfather, despised art, literature, music, huddled them together into a superfluous unmanly unimperial heap referred to as "those things." "Those things" were eagerly expropriated by Maximilian who forged of them a shining armour of superiority. "*I* am artistic; *I* can appreciate the higher values of life, *I* am not a coarse drill-sergeant . . ." He read voraciously; he wrote—poetry, diaries, travel books, anything; he sketched; he planned and built, and designed furniture and schemes of decoration; he mapped out gardens.

Shrinking from the cold surfaces and sharp corners of the here and now, he roamed about for a refuge that was also a power of defiance; he discovered it in the past. He plunged into the proud annals of his race. There was Charles V, Roman Emperor and King of Spain, he on whose domains the sun never set; his captains conquered Mexico and Peru and drained an endless flow of gold into his coffers. And while his navies spanned the ocean and his armies planted his standard upon the strongholds of Inca and Aztec emperors, his brother Ferdinand messed with the sordid bargains and petty quarrels of Austria and Hungary and Bohemia—the Empire over which now

his own brother, Francis Joseph, reigned—Francis Joseph messing with the sordid bargains and petty quarrels of an ill-assorted conglomerate of landlocked barbarians. He, Maximilian, who knew, understood, and loved,—he, he was the true heir of Charles V, not Francis Joseph, who was just good enough to fill the Austrian Ferdinand's shoes. . . .

He roamed into distances. The sea called him—the sea whereon lay the future of his forefathers. He travelled to Egypt, Greece, Asia Minor, Algiers. Spain drew him like a magnet—Spain where far away and long ago melted into a dream of golden glamour. He made a pilgrimage to Granada, burial place of the Spanish kings his ancestors—Ferdinand of Aragon, Philip of Burgundy the husband of Joanna, and others. He descended into the chilly crypt, an unknown wayfarer like a score of others. The sacristan took him for an English tourist. He peered into the dead still faces of their stone likenesses resting with folded hands atop the huge sarcophagi, and reflected. *Vanitas vanitatum vanitas!* At that moment in all Spain he was their nearest kinsman—much nearer than their actual successors, the princes of the realm. It was a mere whim of destiny which blew these Bourbons upon the throne of Charles and Philip II, rightful heritage of Habsburg.

Melancholy parallels trailed across his mind as he gazed upon the tomb of Don Miguel, elder brother of the great Charles, who died at the age of thirteen by a fall from his horse. Poor lad! Senseless accident had robbed him of his birthright—accident of death. Wasn't he, Maximilian, victim of the no less blind chance of birth?

"For such a one history has no pages; posterity remembers only those who inscribe their names by

> deeds accomplished, or (the stubborn gold-trimmed neck of Francis Joseph plodding away over his desk flashed past) who plant themselves as an obstacle in the middle of the road of progress."

For a hundredth, perhaps a thousandth, time the sacristan, his thoughts agloat over a plate of black beans—what a fine prosperous gentleman this tourist looked, worth at least a pint of good wine—brought forth the crown and sword of Ferdinand. Gravely the tall blond stranger weighed them in hand and mind. "Wouldst thou sell me these for shining coin?" Instinctively he fell into the idiom of his reverie. He rattled, opened, a purse of gold. The old man's eyes glistened as he doubled in croaky apology. "I—I cannot do that, your grace. English gentlemen always want to buy things—crowns or bones or carved bits of wood. Want to buy anything they see. Have much money. I am a poor man, but I cannot sell the things they want." The stranger clapped the crown on his head—odd how well it fitted—and cleft the air with the sword. No, one could not buy a crown—but one could fight, perhaps die for it. "What a glorious dream for a nephew of the Spanish Habsburgs, by swinging this sword to conquer this crown!"

The dream enwrapped his mind like a fiery cloud. For an Austrian archduke, if he chose to be active at all, there was only one career open: the army. Maximilian aroused a mild sensation by entering the navy. There was not much of a navy to enter: a few obsolete ships riding at anchor in the harbour of Venice, their chief business consisting of getting repainted and firing the prescribed number of guns for royal visitors. Maximilian decided to create a real fighting machine out of this unpromising material. His brother appointed him Commander-in-Chief. He threw himself into his work with

all the explosive energy of his frustrated cravings. Another escape into unbounded space—another link with the Spanish past—another "I'll show you," to an unimaginative brother. Francis Joseph's only passion was the army. His horizon was enclosed in a barracks yard. Maximilian, the headlands of his fancy ablaze with dream-beacons, Columbus, Magellan, Don Juan d'Austria, memory-rockets whirring against dark sky-present, bursting into banners, battles, paced the bridge of his flagship, rushed centuries, leaped those two years, paced the bridge of his flagship, Maximilian the Navigator . . .

At Vienna he continually suffered from colds. His lungs needed the warmth and sunshine of the tropics. Was it the organic defect which urged him on his dreamy quest of a vanished Southern Empire—was it the dream which with subtle purpose enfeebled the tissues of his body to justify new voyages into the land of his heart's desire?

III

He faced life as a yearning lover—not as one who possesses; possessed only of the self-uncertainty of the dispossessed, he probed and measured his worth. That which to other, happy, people—his brother, for one—was a matter of course to him meant the object of analytical experience. His body, for example. The boy whose superior beauty had been grudgingly admitted even by the biassed Baroness Sturmfeder, grew up into a man of exceptional physical charm. He was tall and slender, with deep blue eyes and wavy blond hair of a golden tint; his skin was white, smooth and soft; he had shapely long hands and feet like a woman. A thoroughbred. But his chin receded abruptly; he knew it; he also knew what it meant: a weak will! He grew a long beard, silky, the

colour of sunlit gold; he parted it in the middle and brushed it sideways. In moments of embarrassment he was wont to stroke it nervously, as if to assure himself it was still there, emblem of superior manhood. A magic ritual—Aladdin rubbing his lamp—Samson awaking from his sleep, feeling for his locks.

He had set himself a goal which he knew was as good as unattainable, thus insuring himself against eventual failure. Between him and the throne of Austria stood a brother, young, stronger and healthier than himself, married to a healthy young wife; presently a son was born; others might follow. Only a miracle could help. In large matters, that is to say; in the one matter that really mattered. A great miracle like the Flood, or the sun suddenly rising in the west instead of east. God's miracle. In small humdrum details small humdrum miracles helped. Man-wrought, self-wrought miracles: magic. He was haunted by the devils of doubt. He exorcised them by the age-old ritual of writing, drew around himself an enchanted circle of notes and memoranda, like a Tuscan priest of old tracing the sacred enclosure, the *templum*. He was worried—he could not make up his mind—he tried to bring harmony into the chaos of his thoughts: he stroked his beard and wrote out a line of action: Ariadne's thread in a labyrinth of possibilities.

A little carton sheet which he always carried in his pocket and frequently consulted was inscribed with his rules of life. "The spirit should dominate the body and enforce moderation and morality." "At every step think of the consequences." "Never allow yourself to be carried away by the first impression." Excellent, if hackneyed, maxims, indicating the simplicity of impulses which they were intended to check. Unfortunately,

though inevitably, Maximilian usually did exactly the opposite of what he had prescribed, excusing himself by the peculiar nature of the emergency.

His very struggle to vindicate his independence resulted in its loss; for, in his effort to differ from his brother, he became his mere negative. Still, the negative of a cool heartless pedant who saw his self-idol as a good *Hofrat* expediting state papers at a desk raised upon the clouds, was not the worst pattern possible. What Francis Joseph by insensible aloofness, cold calculation, stubborn enmity to change sought to keep, Maximilian strove to win by warmth, by devotion, by intuitive sympathy, by intelligent penetration of the spirit of his age.

Thus to Francis Joseph, *divus Cæsar*, Maximilian opposed himself as human, humane, humanist; to Francis Joseph, soldier, Maximilian, sailor; to Francis Joseph, defender of absolute rule, Maximilian, supporter of constitutional reform. The younger brother saw that things were going wrong with the Empire; he heard bitter criticism of his brother's tyrannical system; he understood; he agreed. He made no secret of his opinions; and the liberal Archduke became the favourite of the masses. Francis Joseph, like his grandfather, was jealous; he scolded his brother's indiscretions. "You are playing for publicity." Maximilian's resentment converted itself into additional outbursts of liberalism, provoking further reprimands; and so on, in an endless chain.

IV

In May, 1856, after the close of the Congress of Paris, the Archduke Maximilian paid a visit to the Emperor of the French. Gladly: to see Paris, centre of the world, and be its centre! The brother of the Emperor of Austria

was a most welcome guest at a court which still strongly smelt of fresh paint and fresh pedigree. Napoleon III shared his uncle's contempt and adoration of the Habsburgs. Francis Joseph sent his brother partly because he liked him better distant, partly because the Czar of Russia was still very angry and one never could tell. The visit bade fair to be a great success.

It was. To be sure, Maximilian was at first disappointed; but happily so. The famous French Guards! What a joke in their immense scarlet pantaloons! And the Prince Jerôme Napoleon, himself a pantaloon, fat and flabby-faced, raven locks beating round shoulders, fantastic uniform of French general, blood-red sash of Legion of Honour vainly striving to restrain an aggressive stomach. Maximilian, beardless as yet, was saved from "that indescribable choking feeling which besets one about to discharge an important mission," by that most unmilitary and unprincely *embonpoint*. The moment he saw this figure which reminded him of a played-out *basso* from a fifth rate Italian opera, his self-consciousness was gone. "Everything in gaudy colours, drastic gestures, everlasting noise; the idea was obviously to overwhelm . . . unfortunately the effect was just the opposite; and from this moment on an uncanny shudder crept over me, a feeling of *mal à son aise*, and yet at the same time of moral superiority which during my long sojourn at Paris never completely left me."

How happy he was, prince of ancient lineage, in his expected disappointment at the first glimpse of the self-made Emperor of the French! The great, the dreamed-of moment had come; and it was as if, after prolonged thirst, one craves for a glass of sparkling champagne *frappé à la glace*, and the first draught trickles down one's throat flat and tepid. . . .

> "There he stood, prominent at the head of the stairs, the little man with the broad shoulders and short legs and huge head, nodding self-consciously, his eyes dull and unsteady; suddenly he moved, with his big gilt epaulets and all the glittering gewgaws, with Spain's diamond lamb dangling from his neck, shoving his bow-legs enclosed in the tremendous scarlet military trousers tightening toward the bottom; his broad, hairy, plump hands shook trembling his guest's right, and he mumbled a cataract of incomprehensible words. . . . Involuntarily I sought in that right hand—the conquered sceptre, maybe, or Jove's sheaf of lightning? no, but the traditional riding crop of Franconi the circus director . . ."

The Empress Eugénie, on the other hand, enchanted her critical guest. Maximilian found the fame of her beauty hardly exaggerated; and he was impressed by her half coquettish, half naïve humility which seemed to apologize for her and her husband's sudden elevation. She told him, soon after he had been presented to her, that in 1851—she was a mere Countess de Theba then—she had seen him at Cadiz and added: "But that was before my advancement." She struck the proper tone; the proud Habsburg was conquered. Her occasional howlers amused without estranging him. At luncheon, *à trois*, in the castle of St. Cloud she told of a "quite delicious sailor boy" she had seen that morning in the park. She recognized him as one of the crew of the imperial yacht *Eugénie*, and she was "stricken so agreeably" by his beauty that she commanded her groom to turn and ride back with her so she could have another look. "A very pleasant story this, for a third person; but rather painful for the host who pulled a long and sour face and fidgeted and haw-hawed in his seat."

She was no more indiscreet than Napoleon himself, though.

> "Most remarkable is the lack of restraint with which the Emperor expresses himself in the presence of servants. . . . This is characteristic of the *parvenu* who is devoid of that *esprit de corps* which is careful not to expose its own kind within the hearing of inferiors. . . ."

Versailles, so Maximilian found, was a more pretentious and less lovely Schönbrunn. The cooking at the French court was bad, and the guest discovered that the magnificent plate used at gala dinners hailed from the atelier of Messrs. Christophle, celebrated makers of German silver. Still, as the days went by, his feelings toward Napoleon changed. The legitimate prince succumbed to the adventurer's charm; he was drawn by that restless, romantic quality which he subconsciously recognized as a bond. Maximilian felt that the Emperor of the French, like himself, was a man of vision. And there was one thing that Maximilian could not resist. It was other people's good opinion of himself. It was plain that Napoleon admired him. He, in his turn, appreciated Napoleon's good judgment. Maximilian left Paris as a friend and admirer of the double of Signor Franconi the circus director.

V

King Leopold of the Belgians was, like Napoleon III, a self-made sovereign, having started out in life as a poor but honest young prince. Unlike the Emperor of the French, however, he was scion of an ancient line, that of Coburg, branch of the Saxon royal house of Wettin. Industry, watchfulness, concentration, tact, and other

Maximilian's Castle Miramar near Trieste

Courtesy of Amalthea-Verlag, Vienna-Zürich

Wedding of the Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian and the Princess Charlotte of Belgium at Brussels, July 27, 1857

Painted by Cesare dell' Acqua

Courtesy of Amalthea-Verlag, Vienna-Zürich

progressive business virtues, aided and abetted by good luck, secured him a brilliant career. Elected King upon Belgium's declaration of independence in 1831 he endeared himself to his people and insured his throne against accident by his wise moderation and liberal constitutionalism. As the beloved uncle and intimate adviser of Queen Victoria of England, he married her off to his nephew the young Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg. He himself was son-in-law of the King of the French; his sister the wife of a Russian Grand Duke; his son and heir the husband of an Austrian archduchess; connected also, in some way or other, with the reigning houses of Portugal, Spain and Sweden, he might well have said that upon his nephews, nieces, cousins and various relations-in-law the sun never set.

To the court of this shrewd, prosperous and ever-active monarch the Archduke Maximilian now wended his way. His first impressions were no more favourable than those at Paris. King Leopold lectured him on statecraft, and "spoke editorials out of the *Journal des Débats*." He found the Belgian court vulgar, and constitutional monarchy, even more emphatically than in France, a deplorable joke. But the Princess Charlotte, Leopold's sixteen-year-old daughter, was a marvel of beauty and wit. A few months later Maximilian returned to Brussels, this time an official suitor. Leopold was tremendously pleased at the prospect of a match that would make him father-in-law of the Emperor of Austria's brother. As a good business man, however, he kept his joy to himself, and refused to contribute from the privy purse to his daughter's dowry, consisting of her maternal portion and a national gift. At last this difficulty was overcome, and the contract drawn.

In July, 1857, the wedding took place at Brussels.

What had been conceived as a marriage of state turned out to be a genuine love match. Young, handsome, rich, brilliant, the couple seemed to be blessed with every worldly advantage and destined for a life combining splendour with happiness. Maximilian's dreams fired his bride's imagination; her ambition spurred on his vague plans of grandeur to come. Leopold's watchful eyes scanned the chart of the future.

VI

For the present, the viceroyalty of Lombardy offered an outlet to Maximilian's lust for activity. Leopold had no difficulty in promoting the promotion; Francis Joseph was eager to be rid of an embarrassingly well-liked brother. He remembered his grandfather's worries with brothers Charles and John, and Milan was still further off than Styria. Italian vanity was the other bird smitten by the same stone. The Emperor's brother for Governor was an honour. Maximilian went with enthusiasm. He had felt for some time that Austrian dominion beyond the Alps was in a bad way. He would set right the mistakes of a generation. He would conquer the Italians by love and understanding where his brother's hardness failed. Reforms, home rule, government by the consent of the governed, Lombardy for the Lombards, happily at rest under the protecting wing of Habsburg's eagle. Imagination was the thing. Francis Joseph had none.

The warmth of Italian sunshine, the azure of Italian skies, memories of the immemorial Southward march of Teuton forefathers, Langobard, Saxon, Hohenstaufian, descending snowy passes into the emerald plain studded with marble-porticoed cities to wed Nordic vision to Southern reality, stirred in his blood the wavebeat of mission. He was blond and tall and masculine among a

swarthy low-statured people, a man and master among effete subjects. He lovingly stroked his beard: Aladdin's lamp. The splendours of past ages sprang into life at his bidding: a palace gorgeous with velvets and brocades and precious woods (everything his own design: how bourgeois the Kanzlertrakt of the Vienna Hofburg looked in comparison!); a pageant of halberdiers and Montenegrins and Maurs, all over six feet tall, strangely sweet and worrying to behold in their bulging maleness, projected his dreams, rehearsed Habsburg antecedents in the routine of his household; their glitter at once a memento and a pledge. Italian nobles, the few who broke the boycott with which the Lombard clans smote the crowned executioner's brother, the Counts Cittadella and Marcello, whispered the words of his own ambition: a constitutional Kingdom of Lombardy, with Massimiliano I for King, would secure Italy for Habsburg forever; Austria, losing an unwilling province, would gain an enthusiastic ally.

A torrent of foolscap, of finest quality, inscribed in a ruthlessly neat bureaucratic hand, drenched his schemes: Francis Joseph opening the sluices of his dry ironic ascendency with the regularity of the tides. Whatever Maximilian did was wrong. When Maximilian suggested that there was, after all, something to be said for the Italian claims, Francis Joseph demanded reports on agitators. When Maximilian held forth on the desirability of autonomy Francis Joseph ordered him to shake up the police. When Maximilian was not inefficient he was officious. When he sent a long report would he please be less verbose; when he sent a short one he had better stop sulking.

Maximilian resented the separation of military from civil authority as a personal affront. It was an anomaly

that the Viceroy, the Emperor's brother, should be subordinated, in matters military, to the commander-in-chief at Verona. It was a cumbersome arrangement, impairing prestige, occasioning friction. He asked to be appointed in command of the Italian forces. He might as well have asked to be appointed in command of Alexander's army in India. With his cold reasonableness that was more aggravating than invective Francis Joseph explained to his brother that as long as things went well the merging of the two powers was superfluous, while in times of serious trouble it would be necessary to remove Max from command and to replace him with a reliable competent general. "And this," the Emperor added with brutal adequacy, "would be much more compromising for you than never having had the supreme command at all."

> "I cannot expect you," the Imperial sermon continued, "to agree absolutely with all my decrees, but I must have the assurance that all my decisions will be executed with zeal, and that eventual opposition to my measures will not be encouraged by the impression getting abroad that you too disagree with my policy. This does not mean that you must never make representations to me concerning measures that you regard as impracticable; only you must not publish such representations in foreign newspapers even before they have reached me, as it has happened repeatedly."

Straight ahead Francis Joseph went on his way, unheedful of Maximilian's advice; and in due time arrived at the lookout tower of Solferino. The guns of Magenta and Medole, the shrieks of the dying, the rumble of Austrian artillery in flight, the humiliation at Villafranca, the peace of Zurich sealing the loss of Lombardy, were to

Maximilian but reverberations of his own "I told you so!" He was justified; but by a Pyrrhic victory of his foresight. The defeat smote *his* house; it reduced *his* heritage, hoped for, hopeless. He was the disgusted commander-in-chief of a navy whose principal port was doomed to be the enemy's prey. And Francis Joseph continued to tease him, denied appropriations for indispensable improvements. Maximilian, furious, threatened to resign. The navy, as things were now, meant to him personal protection; if the Italians attacked Miramar was lost. "I am not safe in my own house any more!" Spectres of misfortune swayed in the chambers of his mind, shuttered by a will to despair. Escape! Once more he flung himself into space. A cruise—Spain first, the Azores, Madeira—then the ocean tracked by Columbus's caravels. He sighted the continent of South America. He heard the drums of Pizarro and Valdivia, the thud of Charles' black-armoured hosts marching to subdue new worlds.

His diary echoed, somewhat thinned-out, an amateur echo.

> "Man is interested in that which is far away and unknown; and if he senses life on distant shores he will be drawn by it. It is like a fairy tale that I shall be the first of all the progeny of Ferdinand and Isabel to set foot on the soil of the New World, destined to do so from my earliest days."

He saw his destiny mapped out. In following his dream he followed divine ordinance.

VII

He returned to home and humdrum, enforced inactivity within sight of an heritage squandered away by

stubborn stupidity. His brother nagged him by each successive post; his wife nagged him by word, by touch, by look, to revolt against nagging. Life in the shimmering marble castle washed by liquid Adriatic azure seemed a dull grey. Into a thickening greyness flared the sudden blinding crimson and gold of a sunburst out West: the offer of the Imperial crown of Mexico.

A group of Mexican aristocrats, fanatic monarchists and Catholics, had for years been plotting at Paris, where they ate the *pâté de foie gras*, and drank the champagne, of bitter exile, for the overthrow of the ruthless Liberal President Juarez, enemy of privilege, of unearned increment, and the Roman Church. At last the Republican government's repudiation of a large debt to French bankers provided their long-prayed-for chance. One of the *émigrés*, a handsome young man by the name of Hidalgo, had known the Empress Eugénie when she was plain Countess Montijo, and Her Majesty graciously avowed old acquaintanceship. He persuaded the Empress and through her the Emperor to send a military expedition to Mexico and eventually to set up an Empire with a European prince for Emperor. Napoleon eagerly snatched what seemed to him an opportunity of cheap glory and conquest. He dreamed of turning Mexico, with its vast undeveloped riches, into a French dependency. In January, 1862, a French expeditionary force, supported by nominal British and Spanish contingents (Juarez had not been partial to any nation in dishonouring bankers' claims), landed at Vera Cruz. Meanwhile Napoleon, through the Austrian Foreign Office, sounded the Archduke Maximilian to see if he would accept the crown of the Mexican Empire.

Maximilian saw his destiny fulfilled. Would he accept! Still, hurry was undignified. "At every step

think of the consequences!" His reason leaped to support his choice. He calmed his nerves, allayed his nameless doubts, by his approved magic of memoranda.

> "I do not underestimate," he wrote, "the advantages of accepting to Austria, to the splendour of my house which is now to be revived. It has been the serviceable custom of great dynasties throughout the ages to place cadet princes, living on allowances under the civil list, in advanced posts where they can make themselves useful,"

politically, diplomatically, commercially, and in many other ways. He pointed to the recent aggrandizement of the House of Coburg. "While our House (my brother is a bungler, a bungler) has just lost two sovereignties,"[1] the Coburgs were annexing one throne after the other. Yes, he, the cadet prince, subsisting on an appanage allowed by his brother (the bitterness of it!) would restore the ancient grandeur of Habsburg. The crown of Ferdinand the Catholic which the sacristan in the vault had refused to sell, was now to be his, after all. Destiny willed it.

Discordant voices of prudence mingled into the hymn of fate surging in dark majesty from the crypt of Granada. Maximilian was warned that the group of Mexican *émigrés* at Paris represented no one but themselves; that there was no monarchic sentiment in Mexico; that the very fact of foreign intervention would unite the Mexican people behind Juarez as it had not been united before. Two French sea officers in the Mexican service told King Leopold that the adventure was hopeless, ill-starred, insane. Sir Charles Wyke, former British Minister to Mexico, hoped Maximilian would not stick

[1] The Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Duchy of Modena, incorporated in the kingdom of Italy.

his head into a hornets' nest. As well shout "safety first" to a meteor about to start on its career through space.

Still, meteors have no elder brothers. Maximilian could not accept without Francis Joseph's consent. Francis Joseph was eager enough to give that consent. If Maximilian at Milan was better than Maximilian at Vienna, Maximilian at Mexico was much better than Maximilian at Milan. Mexico was four thousand miles away. Francis Joseph would gladly know four thousand miles between his likable brother and the hysterical Viennese. But he meant to be correct. He meant to do his duty. He warned Maximilian that he would authorize acceptance of the offered crown of Mexico on two conditions: first, that not only France, but also Great Britain and Spain pledged their support; second, that the offer represented the genuine desire of the Mexican people.

Toward the end of 1861 the two brothers met at Venice. It was a long and painful interview. Maximilian pleaded for consent; Francis Joseph harped on terms. Maximilian needed money for preliminary expenses. The comet in financial stress. Francis Joseph (violins of the orchestra of fate resumed a theme, slight and thin like the voice of children) advanced him 200,000 florins—against a Christmas tree with a ten florin note pinned to each branch? No, against his appanage of 100,000 a year, to be repaid in instalments, on the condition that the appanage itself would revert to the family entail if and when Maximilian actually went to Mexico. A good bargain. On his part, Francis Joseph authorized the raising of volunteers for a military expedition.

From a distant irrelevant clot called the earth voices reached the comet—discouraging voices. The British

Government would guarantee nothing—indeed, strongly hinted its disapproval. The Belgian Leopold ("Oh, Vicky is all right, never mind Vicky, I'll take care of her") had taken too much for granted. Britain, thank God, was not yet governed from Brussels. And then that backwoodsman Lincoln, president of the upstart United States, that agglomerate of mechanics and shopkeepers, warned that no infringement upon the Monroe Doctrine, whatever that was, would be tolerated. It seemed he meant that they did not want a European monarchy on American soil. Fortunately what the United States said did not matter much, for the gallant generals of the Confederacy were thrashing the life out of them, and the Confederacy was reasonable and favoured a monarchy in Mexico. So Napoleon said, and he ought to know.

Maximilian brushed aside all warnings, all objections. They were misleading, jealous, envious, insidious. Clear-sighted, honest men who knew Mexico and knew their business assured him of success. The Belgian minister to Mexico, Kint van Roodenbeck, said that the Mexican nation were eagerly awaiting the Emperor. Ah! Maximilian admired the "clear dispassionate judgment" of this "able man of penetrating insight who knows the country and the people, and is intent on telling the truth and nothing but the truth." Perhaps, but not the whole truth. Kint van Roodenbeck withheld the not irrelevant detail that he was deeply interested in the Mexican counter-revolutionary loan then being launched at Paris. There was Bourdillon, a naturalized Englishman, correspondent of the *Times* in Mexico. He reported that although the enterprise was not without its difficulties, there could be no doubt but that Mexico was ripe for an Emperor. "What a fine fellow. Knows Mexico better

than most Mexicans," said the astute King Leopold. Bourdillon forgot to mention that Juarez had confiscated mines in which he held shares, and had him expelled.

The ayes had it. Schertzenlechner, too, approved. Schertzenlechner: a riddle, the one flaw in the crystal of Maximilian's life. Ex-footman of the Imperial household, advanced to valet, then to private secretary. A secretary who could not spell. Shrewd, unscrupulous, violent. Confidential adviser, entrusted with missions demanding highest tact and discretion. He usually carried them out to his master's satisfaction, all the while remembering to draw his pension of an Imperial flunkey. Maximilian sent him to Paris to reconnoitre—among the Mexican colony, at the French court. Schertzenlechner did not know exactly where Mexico lay, but he knew exactly what Maximilian wanted to hear. He reported: Prospects splendid. "Intelligent chap, this Schertzenlechner," Maximilian to his wife who wondered why Schertzenlechner at all.

The British Government, bent on forestalling complications, now resolved on an heroic rescue. Maximilian wanted a crown? Certainly, sir. We carry them in stock. Lord Palmerston told King Leopold that his son-in-law was the fittest person in the world to wear the royal crown of Greece, just vacated by the retirement of the Bavarian Otto. Ironic beastly Englishman. Did he say fine new crown, very slightly used? Leopold threw up his nose. Greece! Maximilian threw a fit. An insult! Compromise himself with a bunch of Balkan sheep thieves and fruit peddlers, what? Greek crown itself been peddled around, refused by half a dozen princes before they offered it to him. Besides, Otto had never resigned. He was chased by a revolution. He was still King. Acceptance out of question. For

once Francis Joseph fully agreed with his brother. What would this world come to if an Archduke grabbed a throne made available by a revolution? Undercutting, if not receiving stolen goods. That's what it was. Also, Greece was too near. If Maximilian went at all let him go far whence return was more difficult. Supposing they deposed him. He would come home to sponge, another Majesty, unmitigated nuisance. No, Mexico, if it must be, but not Greece.

Maximilian, unhesitating pretender, still pretended to hesitate. Eagerness was bad table manners. Style must be maintained even at the cost of some heartburns. His fate was marching on. Oh for an accomplished fact, to cut clear the tangle of indecision! The fact was accomplished. On June 12, 1863, Mexico City proclaimed him Emperor. To be sure, Mexico City was governed by a French general and garrisoned by French battalions. No matter. Napoleon felicitated, dangled the bait. Maximilian, with beauteous smile, gulped it down. He rushed to Schönbrunn. "Dash it all, I, too, am Emperor now!" Not yet, not yet. Francis Joseph, unshakable, was still doing his duty. He warned his brother, enumerated difficulties. Mexico City was not Mexico. It was the headquarters of the French occupation. The *pronunciamiento* was not the expression of the free unhampered will of the people. (Francis Joseph was a stickler for the free unhampered will of the people of Mexico. Nothing less than free and unhampered would do in Mexico.) What about the unconquered hinterland? If Maximilian accepted now he would be Emperor by the grace of the French commander-in-chief. And then, the opposition of the United States. What if the Confederacy is beaten? Of course if Maximilian wished to he was free to go. Provided he fulfilled the condition

about simultaneous guaranties from France, England and Spain.

Maximilian returned to Miramar, shaken somewhat. A letter awaited him. He opened it: "Your Majesty!" It was from General Almonte, one of the Mexican plotters, sharpshooter of barbed flattery. Maximilian felt strong. It was his destiny.

Further news came, further plebiscites, further towns proclaiming Maximilian Emperor. Sir Charles Wyke inquired for the names of the towns. "Ah yes, I know—population two Indians and a monkey." But, what a marvellous, sonorous, Castilian word it was: *pronunciamiento!* On October 21, 1863, Don Juan Gutierrez de Estrada, arch-clerical, arch-rhetorician, Mexican patriot enjoying life and a vast fortune at Rome (next to Juarez he hated Hidalgo best, the Mexican wirepuller at the French court), led a deputation of Mexican patriots to Trieste. Maximilian, heart throbbing aloud, received them, and the first official offer of the Mexican crown. He was deeply flattered, deeply gratified, deeply grateful. He had promised his brother not to accept unless Britain and Spain joined France in guaranty. He now accepted subject to "indispensable guaranties." Of England and Spain not a word.

A furious telegram from Francis Joseph reminded him. He was told he must not render himself into French vassalage. Very good of Francis Joseph. The dice were cast. He was mortgaging the future—a few per cent. more or less of interest, what did it matter? After all, his success was vouchsafed not by the pledges of foreign powers, but by his own power to work good, to bring peace, prosperity and happiness to the people of Mexico, and by the loyalty and devotion of the Mexican people. Guaranties, indeed! He stroked his beard.

VIII

The dragnet of intrigue and cajolery was slowly gathered in. Maximilian wriggled happily. Suddenly he was jerked back into a sea of uncertainty. A letter from Count Rechberg, Minister of the Imperial House, demanded peremptorily that he should renounce his rights of succession to the Austrian throne.

Maximilian, candidate at any price, balked at this. He was the nearest agnate; the Crown Prince, Rudolf, was six years old and none too robust; Francis Joseph's estrangement from the Empress made the birth of another son unlikely. If Rudolf died, Maximilian would be heir-presumptive. To this moment he had only realized the distance that had separated him from the imperial crown; for the first time a sense of his nearness overwhelmed him; it was as if he had dropped a reversed telescope. Mexico seemed far, very far away. He was not going to sign away his birthright. He was going to make a stand. He borrowed a bolt from his brother's quiver. How about Legitimacy? How could he waive a God-entailed right which was also a duty? It was preposterous. Francis Joseph presented him with a memorandum, prepared by some bright light of the Chancellery, proving by elaborate historic and legal argument that renunciation was the only proper, the inevitable, course.

Driver of many a hard bargain, for once Francis Joseph demanded only what was reasonable. The possibility of the Austrian crown reverting to Maximilian was not imminent; yet it had to be envisaged. A personal union of Austria and Mexico would be a monstrosity—utterly impracticable, the source of unending compli-

cations. Maximilian must see that he could not eat his cake and have it too.

Maximilian would not see. They wrangled. Maximilian's indignation was boiling over, Charlotte sedulously stoking its fire. Calmly Francis Joseph sent him a letter of renunciation, ready for signature. "Never!" They both appealed to Napoleon. The Emperor of the French politely replied he should have thought this matter was settled two years ago. Francis Joseph promised adequate position for Max and Charlotte should the Mexican venture fail. "Never!" Maximilian stamped his foot. Francis Joseph put his down. Early on April 9 the Emperor arrived at Miramar, and went straight to the library where he was closeted with his brother for an hour. When they issued both showed signs of highest emotion. Their eyes were red; Maximilian stroked a silky beard messed by moisture. There was a solemn assemblage in the gala hall. A miniature Olmütz. Archdukes with the Fleece and in scarlet pantaloons (tight-fitting, not baggy like the French); the haggard figure of Premier Schmerling, the bland one of Count Rechberg; the hero of Solferino, General Benedek, representing the army (gone were Radetzky, Jellačić, Windischgraetz!). Steel-voiced, Francis Joseph announced that the Archduke Maximilian had just signed the act of renunciation.

The Emperor did not even stay for luncheon. The engine of his train was puffing at the little station *de luxe*. Smug and well-fed the engine puffed as Francis Joseph, the letter of renunciation safely signed, sealed, in his pocket, put his foot on the steps of his drawing room car. Two suites saluted, the engine whistled. Suddenly Francis Joseph stepped back. A strange, unprecedented, un-imperial thing happened: Francis Joseph cried out,

"Max!" For a minute the brothers stood in wordless embrace, conqueror of new worlds and possessor of a signed letter, tears streaming down faces that once two little boys pulled into grimaces behind teacher's back. "The Emperor weeps!" He had wept at Villafranca; but that was in a room; none but Napoleon saw. It only lasted a minute. With his famous elastic step the Emperor of Austria swung himself on the platform. Waving of hats and handkerchiefs. Off the train pulled.

They never saw each other again.

The road was clear. Next day—it was the tenth of April—the Mexican delegation waited on Maximilian. In an endless speech, flowing with honey, staggering with baroque ornament, expiring with Byzantine homage, Don Juan Gutierrez de Estrada placed the, metaphorical, crown of Mexico before the feet of the Archduke Maximilian of Austria. He brought to him, he said, a message of love without end, of unshakable loyalty, from the Mexican people. The Mexicans present—*émigrés* all—listened with grave faces. They knew that for a quarter of a century this millionaire pedant had not been in Mexico, a country made unsafe by the presence of too many Mexicans. They knew that the one message that the Mexican people at large would send through Gutierrez would be a message of bullets. Still, it was a very beautiful speech. Even Hidalgo, whom Gutierrez hated best of all men next to President Juarez, and who returned the sentiment in kind, seemed moved.

In a clear ringing voice Maximilian, master of his person by superhuman strain, thanked them. He pledged himself to work indefatigably for the liberty, law and order, greatness and independence of Mexico. He vowed to be a constitutional ruler, Emperor not of a party but

of a people united in devotion to the weal of their common Mexican fatherland.

Grave dark faces above dark swallowtail coats emitted Spanish cheers: Long live Massimiliano, long live Carlotta! Outside, the Imperial Mexican standard ran up the flagstaff on Miramar Castle; warships in the roadstead fired the Imperial salute. A telegram announcing the joyous event was sent to its father Napoleon.

In the evening, a banquet—sparkling crystal chandeliers, sparkling champagne, sparkling flow of Spanish speeches.

The Empress Carlotta presided. To her, and his, infinite regret the Emperor was prevented by slight indisposition. In a darkened room Maximilian, his face buried in his hands over a table, cried like a child.

IX

The new Empire needed new Ambassadors, and the new Emperor had to appoint them. For the most important, most delicate post, the embassy at Vienna, he selected the eloquent and tactful Gutierrez. With profuse thanks and no less profuse apologies that statesman declined the honour. He was no seeker of preferment; he had merely done his duty by his country; he claimed no reward beyond the consciousness that his Sovereign was favourably inclined toward him; all he desired was to spend the rest of his days in the obscurity of his modest retreat. His modest retreat was called the Palazzo Marescotti; it was one of the most gorgeous Roman mansions; he was no fool to exchange it for leased legation quarters at Vienna. Moreover, as a Minister he was apt to be recalled, any moment, to a dreadful place called Mexico, where they had no culture, and where, so he

The Archduchess Charlotte in Milanese Dress

Painted by J. Portaels, Milano, 1857

Courtesy of Amalthea-Verlag, Vienna-Zürich

The Departure from Miramar, April 14, 1864

Painted by Cesare dell' Acqua

Courtesy of Amalthea-Verlag, Vienna-Zürich

heard, people shot monarchists and Conservatives on sight in the streets.

Hidalgo, on the other hand, knew what he owed to his Emperor and his nation. He was no shirker. Without hesitancy he accepted the appointment to Ambassador to the French Court. Disapproving of procrastination in vital affairs of state the new Ambassador wrote on the same day to Maximilian, asking him to raise his stipend of 60,000 francs, received so far as unofficial envoy, to the ambassadorial figure of 90,000 francs a year.

X

They went to Rome first, and received the Pope's blessing. The Eternal City was ablaze with festivities to honour the Emperor and Empress of Mexico. Gutierrez entertained them in his Palazzo Marescotti with true Mexican hospitality; they thought it was the true hospitality of Mexico. To be addressed as Your Majesty! Outside the palace was drawn a guard of the French garrison. Maximilian was flattered by Napoleon's courtesy which did not suggest to him, as it did to a cynical observer, the idea that the French guarded him so closely because they were afraid he might run away and they might not find another man to accept the crown of Mexico.

Tiny black dot on the horizon. Resolution adopted by the Washington Congress warning that the United States of America would decline to recognize any monarchy erected on the ruins of a republic.

They would decline, would they?

After Rome, the Mediterranean. On board his old frigate *Novara*, placed at his disposal by his brother. Francis Joseph was anxious to see him safe across the ocean. Everywhere, by passing warships, in ports,

the Imperial Mexican standard greeted with the appropriate number of guns—just as if it had been the Imperial standard of Austria. No difference at all. What thrills! The climax came at Gibraltar. Into the honours accorded by the Governor, Maximilian, always on the lookout for signs, read Queen Victoria's disavowal of her Cabinet's hostile policy.

To be saluted as Emperor was almost as good as Empire itself. But there was one nagging, harassing thought to mar the unrolling prospects of future glory, indelible, omnipresent, like a flaw in the window of a railway car etched into the passing landscape. A memory with a poisoned barb. Charlotte tugged at it when his own consciousness did not. That act of renunciation! What a fool he had been to sign it! Francis Joseph could not have done a thing had he persevered in his refusal. It was an infernal shame. It was pure blackmail. His sense of justice, his sense of law, revolted. An obligation contracted under duress is invalid. He wished this obligation invalid. Therefore it had been contracted under duress. He drew up a statement. He declared he had signed the act of renunciation without ever having read it. It was an insult to the people of Austria, to the principle of Legitimacy. He protested herewith against the eventuality of usurpation.

This statement he signed. It was witnessed by his Belgian adviser Eloin, and by Schertzenlechner, who attested, not only his signature, but also their own knowledge that the act of renunciation had been extorted. Copies of the document were sent, from port, to all Mexican embassies in Europe. In strictest secrecy: not to be published until the death of either Francis Joseph or the Crown Prince Rudolf.

Fate builds a human life by joining accident to accident

into a necessary, alone-possible whole. Blindly, so they believe who see not that the law of fate is not causality, which is the law of timeless nature, but counterpoint, the law of music, of growing organic form. And, as in nature the evolution of a unit retails, phase by phase, the larger evolution of the race, so in life a single episode may resolve into a pattern which is that of life itself. The story of this protest, of renunciation recanted, is the story of Maximilian's life. He did not want to sign; a stronger will made him do so; he signed, but with a mental reservation; he retracted, yet not openly, but with a proviso, postponing the issue, leaving a loophole for retracting the retraction. He craved the crown of Mexico, but was not prepared to pay the not unreasonable price, renouncing the Austrian. "A sentimentalist is he who abhors the tremendous obligation of a deed done." A sentimentalist, in other words, is the eternal child. The difference between life and play: in play one may do it over again; in life one may not. It is the irrevocable quality of life that most hurts, and puzzles, those who have never grown up. "Excuse me, it was a mistake." Why cannot life be like chess?

His conscious argument was a perfect projection of this emotional background. He pleaded that he had not read the act of renunciation before he signed it. The document had been in his possession for eight weeks. Was it possible that he should not have read it? In the case of almost any other person the plea would have been a downright lie. In the case of Maximilian it was literally true. He did not have to read the paper; he knew exactly what was in it, and he signed without reading, subconsciously preparing his plea. Yet he was no hypocrite; only a child. He could not adapt the real world to his needs; so he left it alone and constructed a

world of his own where his self-idol reigned undisturbed by reality. He saw only that which pleased him; he heard only that which pleased him; he read only that which pleased him.

A frightened child, he did not venture alone out in the dark. Eloin and Schertzenlechner were no mere witnesses; they were sponsors as well: two big boys protecting the little one.

In strictest secrecy, the protest arrived at the Mexican Embassy in Vienna. In strictest secrecy, a duplicate arrived at Francis Joseph's private cabinet. Who had sent it? Eloin? Hardly. He was a Belgian; he was Leopold's man; his later conduct acquitted him as an upright, faithful servant. Schertzenlechner, now Imperial Mexican Councillor of State (still collecting Imperial Austrian footman's pension, every little helps), was the only other initiate. The symbolism of Maximilian's recantation would not have been complete had not betrayal added the finishing touch.

He was unable to cut his losses, a sentimentalist. And yet: in the face of the Mexican enterprise, with its difficulties and its splendours, its dangers and its rewards, the act of renunciation was but a side-issue. Or, it ought to have been, to a man sure of himself. Upon Maximilian it loaded a handicap of regret. He approached his Empire with a divided heart. If only Francis Joseph had not . . . That *if* was the premium he paid on his psychic insurance policy against defeat.

To attain unity he once more summoned the old magic of writing. Day after day he sat in his stateroom for hours, working. Instructions for his private cabinet: a manual of governmental business, with special view on how to treat the public. Above all, a 600-page Book of Ceremonial, with drawings and plans. Happy hours those

were. He was governing. And he was now the hero of the daily-recurrent lithurgic drama of court procedure, of the passion play of etiquette.

He was happy, also, looking forward to the tropical climate of Mexico. For him no more the cold, damp, nasty winters of Austria! He recalled an episode of twelve years ago. It was on December 31, 1851. New Year's Eve. As midnight was approaching the gay party amused themselves by divining the future from the accidental shapes of molten lead. It was his turn. His spoonful of sizzling metal cooled into the form of a basket full of strange fruit. What were they? Pineapples! At the time nobody attached any significance to the thing; yet it was a portent.

XI

On May 28, 1864, the *Novara* droped anchor off Vera Cruz. Next day the Imperial party landed. A sullen reception: the town was Juarist. Unpleasant start. A few miles of railroad across swamps: end of the line. Then diligences. Type, antediluvial. Unspeakable roads. Somebody said the company operating the mail coaches posted a reward of 100 pesos to each driver who completed a month's run without a spill; but so far no bounty had been claimed. A cheering prospect. Every now and then Maximilian and Charlotte had to alight and proceed on foot. Once one of the coaches capsized, and the Prime Minister, Velazquez de Leon, was landed through the window in a ditch.

Further inland, as the road swung from the hot marshes of the coast up the long slope of the temperate zone, Maximilian's spirit rose. The owners of the great plantations, good monarchists all, turned out as a guard

of honour: smart men in black frock coats, on splendid horses, and richly-dressed ladies of exotic beauty speaking perfect French. A delightful cavalcade. Alongside Maximilian's coach rode the commander of the escort, Colonel Don Miguel Lopez. Handsome, dark, lithe-limbed Mexican, drooping moustache, drooping eyelids. Sullen spasms of brooding suddenly swept away by gushes of eloquent courtesy. Delightful talker when he talks: perhaps too much self-irony. Hardly a happy man: but oh, so picturesque. Close by the side of Maximilian's carriage he rode, dark-faced, dark-horsed, dark-voiced, grim watchful eye of Mexican people guarding its Emperor.

On the whole, the first impressions enchanted both Maximilian and Charlotte. Their new subjects, courteous, polished, ornate, different from anything European, conquered their hearts. Now it was their turn to conquer. Maximilian had charming manners; he was simple and friendly without condescension, natural and direct without familiarity, never repellent, still always preserving a distance. One of his resolutions was to be democratic. "They are, after all, people just like ourselves." And this was America. Land of equality. No silly prejudices, class distinctions, snobberies. "We are brothers all." He affected plain clothing—the undress jacket of an Austrian Admiral, somewhat adapted, enormous bright silk sash, wide fringed Mexican pantaloons and a huge straw hat like a gentleman planter's. A laugh on old Francis Joseph, with his fifty-eight different gala uniforms, three valets needed to keep the moths out. And that ridiculous Spanish etiquette at the Vienna court where nothing, nothing was Spanish! In Mexico reigned an etiquette of freedom and true Castilian grace. Every detail prescribed by Maximilian himself, in a book of six hundred pages. Charlotte eagerly, graciously, seconded.

Simplicity was the thing. "The people here are tired of gold-laced generals," she wrote to Eugénie.

They were wrong. The aristocrats of the conservative, their, party, Castilians all, sons of, more or less, authentic Goths, conceived of the empire as a solar system where they in the capacity of planets would reflect the radiance of an imperial sun. Despite the 600-page *protocol*, they now saw themselves cheated out of their pageantry by an Emperor seeking the Simple Life. As to the lower classes, mainly Indian, memories of Montezuma's plumed splendours drowsing in their souls, an Emperor who did not speak from purple clouds with a voice of thunder but said, "How do you do," and shook hands, an Emperor who ate corn bread like a peon, in a country where Emperors of old dieted on hearts of young heroes, was no Emperor at all. If they were tired of gold-laced generals it was only because they preferred a God hammered of pure gold.

At Miramar Maximilian had announced his programme: Emperor of a people, not of a party. From the outset he hoped, and worked, to win over the opposition, to make peace, eventually, even with Juarez. Juarez his prime minister: dream of his dreams. To conquer by love and by understanding. Peace—peace with the rival, the peace which was not in his childhood. He appointed a prominent liberal, almost a Juarist, to Foreign Minister: Ramirez. Wrong again. The liberals went on growling: foreign usurper. The conservatives began to grumble: foreign fool. Does not know a good civil war when he sees it. Did we import an Emperor to provide jobs for our enemies?

The French troops won victory after victory. A territory the size of France now acknowledged the Emperor. The Juarists in flight! Yielding everywhere.

Yielding—as the sea yields to a galloping ship—closing again behind. On board the ship of Empire nothing but difficulty. Disgruntled partisans: Maximilian did not kill off the liberals quickly enough. The vital loan at Paris fared badly. Only an instant success could help. Success: where, how? From a harassing here and now Maximilian once more saved himself into perspectives. Give the Mexicans glory! Conquest: an Emperor should win, not lose, provinces. (Francis Joseph was losing them all the time.) Relations with the neighbour republic of Guatemala were notoriously bad. He befriended the Conservative party, sent an expedition, supported a revolution. Like Napoleon. His purpose was, ultimately, to annex Guatemala. Restore historic frontiers of great Aztec Empire. In truth, he was once more running away from reality. In a Mexico turned Europe now, Guatemala became his Mexico. On a journey he met the Marshal Bazaine. "The present is sad, but the future will be splendid," he epigraphed himself.

Difficulties—they were endless, increasing—could not swerve him from his high aims. He had set out to make Mexico prosperous, happy, free. Prosperity and happiness were a long way off; but to freedom there was a short cut. An Emperor could decree freedom. He contemplated liberating the peons, emancipating the Indians. The conservative aristocrats scoffed and growled. Liberate the peons, would he? That's what we wanted an Emperor for, precisely. He had to give it up, for the time being. He could not free their bodies; he might free their souls. He would show the liberals, show Juarez, that he was a liberal himself. He thought of the Concordat in Austria: Francis Joseph debasing the State into a vassal of the Church. Maximilian astonished friend and foe by a decree promulgating complete religious

The Emperor Maximilian in Mexican National Dress

Painted by Ebeling

Courtesy of Amalthea-Verlag, Vienna-Zürich

The Imperial Palace at Mexico City

Courtesy of Amalthea-Verlag, Vienna-Zürich

liberty and confirming the secularization of church property. Secularization of church property: Juarez had done that. One of his measures which provoked Napoleon to intervention. This now was frank wooing. "Dear brother—why fight? We want the same thing." It was suicide. Juarez ignored the overture in cold disdain, as he had ignored others before. And the bishops, hitherto his most substantial supporters, turned against him. Why, he was as bad as the liberals, if not worse. Transoceanic whispers reached even Vienna: Maximilian a secret freemason! The papal nuncio gave him up as a bad job. Some of the prelates (safety first, one never can tell) opened flirtations with the Republicans.

Napoleon was weary of the whole business. The Mexican adventure netted him, in lieu of the expected bargain counter *gloire*, a horrid mess. It cost men, money, popularity; it was provoking the United States, by now obviously the winner in the struggle with the Confederacy; it was leading nowhere. The Marshal Bazaine, faithful sympathetic soul, was sending optimistic reports. He hated Mexico. Beastly country, malaria, greasers cheeky beggars. He concluded that Maximilian was now able to stand on his own.

Was he? His Empire extended just as far as the last French sentry could shoot. Beyond that everything belonged to Juarez. Bazaine began to reship some of his troops to France. Wherever at one end of a town a French company marched out, in marched a Juarist battalion at the other. They seemed to grow like mushrooms. At Chapultepec, the fairy castle whose more than earthly beauty enchanted the Imperial couple, dinner was frequently interrupted by cannonade. At festooned garden parties courtiers carried pistols. It was a gay, gallant, desperate life, full of colour and perfume

and music, a minuet in the saloon of a sinking ship. All around was the enemy: soft, receding, elusive, ubiquitous, merciless, like the sea. Immense waves of enemy beating against a lone ship sailing in the night, the illuminated château of Chapultepec towering atop a plateau.

On April 9, 1865, General Lee surrendered at Appomattox Court House. When the news reached Washington the Austrian minister, Wydenbruck, was the first among diplomats to congratulate Seward. Francis Joseph would take no chances. Addressing a crowd from his balcony, the Secretary of State praised the wise moderation of the Austrian Emperor.

Appomattox meant the end of the Mexican Empire. Yet as the last threads of his hold on the present slipped away Maximilian felt his grasp on the future tightening. He staked his faith on the Indians. They formed the majority of the Mexican people. He would free them and endow them with land. They would help him on to victory. Majority by numbers, as a state-building factor they, hardly above the level of beasts of burden, amounted to nil. He staked his faith on Juarez. He would meet his rival and make his peace with him. They would become friends. They both worked for the same end: the greatness and happiness of Mexico. A letter was received from Gutierrez. From his Roman stronghold that protagonist lectured Maximilian on the sanctity of the Catholic and monarchic principles which His Majesty, the writer could not but, with all his profound respect and admiration, his heart grieving, his soul bleeding with a thousand sorrows and apprehensions, of course the difficulties, the difficulties, tremendous, His Majesty must forgive his boldness, but to all those who, like his humblest servant the writer, had the interest of the

Mexican monarchy at heart, it seemed that His Majesty did not, as he well might have been expected. Impudent long-winded old coward! Maximilian's reply lashed him across the face. "And now I shall tell you the truth. There has never been a monarchy or monarchic sentiment in Mexico."

The dreamer was awake. For a moment.

XII

Bazaine accused him of weakness. It was impossible to restore law and order as long as the Emperor constantly pardoned rebels. Amid a hostile population a strong State could not be founded on humanitarian slogans. Liberty, equality, fraternity, indeed! jeered the Marshal of Bonapartist France. Tommyrot! Common sense and the mailed fist, and firing squads for obstreperous greasers, that was the stuff!

Bazaine submitted for signature a decree providing instant death penalty for any Mexican caught with arms in hand. Maximilian writhed in agony. That he who had come to bring not a sword, but peace; he whom the Indian villagers in chanting processions had greeted as the returned White Saviour of ancient legend; he who would be Emperor not of a party but of the people; he, who even then was holding out a brotherly right hand to Juarez—that he should sanction that wholesale butchery? Never! Bazaine grew insolent. "Softness, sentimentalism! An Emperor should be a man!" That was a full hit. Maximilian stroked his beard, and on October 3, 1866, signed the Death Decree. From all corners of the country blood gushed. Nothing was easier than to catch inconvenient people with arms in hand in a country where almost everybody went armed. Imperialist Colonels settled old family feuds and overdue tailors' bills by means

of quick-working firing squads. Within a few weeks hundreds were shot without trial. After this, there could be no compromise, nothing but war to the death.

Maximilian's army was dwindling. Pay was in arrears for months; there was no money for ammunition and equipment, hardly any for food. Officers and men walked comfortably across to the Juarist lines in broad daylight, or stayed where they were and "pronounced" for the Republic. Maximilian's confidant Herzfeld reported from Vienna that he had an audience with Francis Joseph; the Emperor of Austria spoke scornfully of the Mexican army. "Oh, Maximilian is all right as a naval officer, but he knows too little about army matters." On Maximilian's command, Captain Pierron, Bazaine's aide-de-camp, elaborated a memorandum on the organization of the Mexican army. This was sent, with Maximilian's compliments, to Vienna. "I trust," he wrote to his brother, "that you will find that we have made improvements here in Mexico which are as yet unattained in Europe."

XIII

By the spring of 1866—two years had passed since the landing at Vera Cruz—the four premises upon which Maximilian built his Mexican enterprise crumbled to dust. The powerful monarchist party, comprising the majority of the Mexican nation, which, according to Gutierrez, Hidalgo, and the other safe-players at Paris and Rome would rally to his side, simply did not exist. Napoleon's pledge of support was not worth the paper it was written on. The Emperor of the French washed his hands of the Emperor of Mexico and made ready to recall his troops. The War of Secession ended with the com-

plete victory of the North. If there ever had been a chance of reconciliation and compromise with Juarez, the Death Decree killed it. All the ten-florin notes on the Christmas tree of Maximilian's hopes proved counterfeit. The day of payment had come; and he could not pay.

It was not his fault, though. He had been betrayed all around. Betrayed by Gutierrez and the other conservatives. Betrayed by Napoleon. Betrayed by his own brother, too. For Francis Joseph, contrary to their solemn agreement, published, in November, 1865, his Act of Renunciation, and seized every opportunity to demonstrate, to the world in general and the United States in particular, that he had nothing to do with Maximilian. What for? Austria was in no danger. Neutrality was all very well; kowtowing to his brother's enemies was a different thing altogether. And he, Maximilian, risking his health, his very life, for the greater glory of the House of Habsburg!

He had been betrayed, above all, by his own generous impulses. But now he saw it; and he was through. He had done the humanly possible. He had done his best to serve his adopted country. He had poured a few drops of oil into the lamp of enlightenment; he had contributed his share, however modest, toward the great work of perfecting the world. He never for a moment compromised his high ideals. It was of no avail. His conscience acquitted him. He drew up a manifesto announcing his abdication.

Charlotte stopped him. Called him a coward. This highstrung, beautiful and barren woman, in whom the tender warmth of motherhood was converted into a devastating fire of ambition, had, under the ordeal of the past two years, drifted further and further away from the terrors of reality until she saw reality itself as one unend-

ing terror. But she was brave. She would take matters in hand herself. She would go to Europe, make Napoleon repent of his treachery, stir up public opinion everywhere, fetch help from the Pope. Maximilian tore up the manifesto. He adored her. She sailed. She saw Napoleon. The reception was cold. The Emperor of the French was very sorry indeed. He, too, had done his best. He could do no more. His hands were tied. The French nation opposed further sacrifices. Eugénie was sorry too.

Charlotte's letters from Paris made Maximilian shiver. He was used to his wife's exalted tone; but there burned in these pages a passion that was not of this world. She had been blind, misguided, she wrote; but at last she saw the light. Napoleon was not a man. He was the Evil One himself. He plotted to set up on earth the Empire of Darkness. The four horsemen of the Apocalypse were on their way. A terrible, all-destroying battle was at hand. But in the end Maximilian, her darling, would triumph. He would trample Napoleon down as St. George trampled the dragon. Maximilian, Champion of Light, would in the end make Mexico the greatest power and become Emperor of the World.

Napoleon, Charlotte remarked incidentally, tried to poison her with a glass of orangeade. She did not touch any food or drink at the French court after that.

She went to Rome. The Pope blessed her, and sent his blessing to Maximilian. For the rest, he said he was sorry. What could he do? Charlotte was not to be turned away like that. On September 27 she had a three hours' interview with the Holy Father. She threw herself at his feet, pleaded, implored, cried, fainted. No result. She left in utter gloom and locked herself up in her apartment. Early next morning she rushed to the

Palace, half-dressed, bareheaded, forced her way into the Pope's presence and begged him to save her from Napoleon's hired assassins who swarmed around her. The Pope helped her on her feet and had her escorted home. That was the end of Charlotte. Her mind had given way. She never recovered consciousness, though her poor broken shell was to survive the other principals in her tragedy by more than half a century.

From all sides the battalions of doom, with thundering footstep, closed down on Maximilian. On October 1, Napoleon, yielding, none too loath, to the pressure of the United States, announced the withdrawal of all French troops from Mexico and counselled abdication. Stephen Herzfeld, a former Austrian naval officer, an intelligent and vigorous man who loved Maximilian like a brother, implored him to leave the accursed land. He had done his duty, and more; he had proved his mettle; he was surrounded by knavery and treason; to fight on would be sheer purposeless suicide, to retreat both honourable and wise. Herzfeld arranged everything. Day and night the *Dandolo* was under steam off Vera Cruz.

Maximilian was on the point of obeying reason. Once more a taunting word stoppped him. "Abdication is flight." Father Fischer, S. J., was in more than one sense Schertzenlechner's worthy successor. He had just turned up from nowhere in particular, and furrowed himself into Maximilian's favour; he saw a brilliant career beckoning, and did not mean to let go. He reminded Maximilian of his sublime duty to his people, and advised him to call a National Congress to decide the issue between him and Juarez. It was the counsel of vanity, postponement and futile hope—the voice from within; it prevailed over Herzfeld's entreaties for instant action, with the implied avowal of error. Maximilian decided to stay.

XIV

On February 13, 1867, the rearguard of the French expeditionary force embarked at Vera Cruz. Marshal Bazaine was the last Frenchman to leave the soil of Mexico. At the last moment he begged Maximilian to come along and save what now alone could be saved: his life. Maximilian refused.

Juarez now was lord and master in Mexico. The Empire consisted of four cities, precariously held: the capital, Puebla, Vera Cruz, Querétaro. To the last-named Maximilian, escorted by a few chosen troops, marched off on the very day when Bazaine sailed. He wanted to start the day before, but he had no money, and had to raise some. He ordered all Europeans of his staff to stay behind. His column was well on the way when a lone rider overtook it. Colonel Prince Felix Salm-Salm, a German soldier of fortune. Courageous, devoted, resourceful. He pleaded some irrelevant pretext. Maximilian shook his hand and permitted him to join.

Sixty thousand Juarists, flushed with victory, advanced on Querétaro in concentric attack. Maximilian mustered about sixteen thousand men at the start—a number rapidly shrinking through desertions. Querétaro was a death trap. No one had any illusions on that point—least of all Maximilian. The American Secretary of State Seward, on April 8, instructed his Minister to Mexico, Campbell, to warn Juarez that the United States expected him to treat Maximilian as civilized nations treat prisoners of war.

Maximilian courted death. Always where bullets flew the thickest. The bullets steered clear of him.

Food was running low. He refused all privileges and shared the miserable fare of his soldiers.

An attempt at relief by General Marquez was squashed by General Porfirio Diaz. Maximilian decided on a sortie. On the night of May 14 Maximilian, with a picked party, was to cut through the investing lines and make for the Sierra Gorda, where he would be safe among the faithful kinsmen of his gallant general, the full-blood Indian Thomas Mejia. At the last moment the Emperor postponed the sally by twenty-four hours at the behest of Colonel Lopez. The commander of his bodyguard on his first journey to the capital was, with Maximilian's knowledge, in communication with the Juarist general Escobedo. He now held out hope of an honourable compromise. Having obtained the delay, he made his way across the lines to Escobedo's headquarters to resume the parley.

It was eleven o'clock when Lopez left the Emperor. About five in the morning he returned, leading a Juarist detachment. Those guards who had not been bribed were overpowered and disarmed; all exits of the Convent of the Cross, the Imperial quarters, were occupied. Colonel Lopez ran upstairs and raised the alarm: "The Juarists are here!" Prince Salm heard him and dashed into Maximilian's bedroom: "Your Majesty, the enemy is here." Maximilian rose from an uneasy slumber. It took a minute or two until he grasped the situation. He dressed calmly, drew his sabre, and went downstairs, accompanied by Salm and two others. At the foot of the stairs Juarist soldiers levelled their bayonets to block the way. Their commander, Colonel Gallardo, ordered them back. "Let these gentlemen pass. They are harmless citizens."

The road was free. Lopez had stipulated that as part

payment for his treachery; and Escobedo, well aware that Maximilian captured meant an awful complication, consented. But Maximilian refused to save himself and leave his faithful comrades Miramon and Mejia to their fate. He proceeded to the Hill of Bells and sent an orderly to fetch the generals.

In the tremendous white-and-azure light-flood of the tropical sunrise the Emperor Maximilian was taken prisoner on the Cerro de la Campana. He had meant to make a last stand; but on second thought he desisted. There had been enough of bloodshed. He handed his sword to General Escobedo, who did not know what to do with it, and fumbled before his quarry with an apologetic smile. From the hundred towers of Querétaro the bells, confused and merry like a drunken army, rang peals of victory. The narrow streets swarmed with Juarist troops; groups of men and women, relieved from their terror of a sack, fraternized with the soldiers and joined in the carnival. Brisk staccato strains of the leering song, "Mama Carlotta, Mama Carlotta."

Charlotte! In a darkened room, four thousand miles away, listening for the distant clatter of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. Maximilian bowed his head. He gave his life to redeem *these*. Obscene swine.

XV

There was one man in Mexico who did not realize the gravity of the captured Emperor's predicament. It was the captured Emperor himself. What could the Liberals do to him? They surely could not punish him? Wasn't he a prisoner of war? He did not know Juarez, and judged the President's mental processes by his own. Generosity was Maximilian's lifeblood. It was no part of the Indian President's steel-and-fire character.

Had Maximilian taken Colonel Gallardo's cue and slipped away in the turmoil of the night raid Juarez would possibly have felt relieved. One complication less. Now that the Emperor embarrassed him by being his prisoner, the gloomy Aztec, impregnated with his heritage of oppression, degradation, torture, knew no mercy. He had four centuries to avenge on the nephew of Cortez's sovereign. He was an Indian—the smallest of the small, the lowest of the low, a slave, an outcast, an animal almost, in the eyes of those haughty blond lords of Europe. And one of them—a fine full-grown specimen, a first-rate authentic Habsburg, he held in the hollow of his hand.

Yet Juarez was unconscious of any personal motive in his vengeance. This Aztec was a lawyer and a student of history; his native savagery was civilized into the impersonal ruthlessness of logic. He was a fanatic of freedom; he regarded himself as the incarnation of the Republican Principle, as the instrument of Historic Necessity. In annihilating Maximilian he hated him no more than an avalanche hates the lone mountaineer caught in its way.

The diplomats at San Luis de Potosi cherished no delusions. Perhaps the least pessimistic of them was the Austrian minister Baron Lago. A mildly aloof sort of person representing a painfully aloof sovereign, receiving strictly aloof instructions. By contrast, the Prussian minister Baron Magnus was indefatigable in Maximilian's cause. He besieged Juarez; he pleaded, threatened, cajoled, pulled wires, laid far-reaching plans. Juarez listened to him, said little, and went his way.

As his efforts and those of his colleagues at San Luis de Potosi appeared unavailing—Juarez made it plain he did not care what the European powers thought of him—the Government of the United States was asked to inter-

vene. On June 1, Secretary of State Seward instructed the American Minister to Mexico, Mr. Campbell, to proceed to Juarez and make a plea for Maximilian's life. Mr. Campbell was a comfortable gentleman who preferred the cultured and leisurely atmosphere of New Orleans to the hazards of civil war in Mexico, for he never presented his credentials, never even crossed the frontier. He now countered Seward's orders by complaining about the difficulties of travel. Ten precious days were thus wasted; on June 11 President Johnson commanded Campbell to depart at once. Thereupon that gallant gentleman fell sick and resigned.

Flight was the only chance left. A desperate chance. Its engineer was a woman. Abandoned by his army, his ministers, his cousins the Emperors and Kings of the old world, Maximilian still had two friends left who were prepared to stake their very lives on his rescue; the Prince and Princess Salm. In courage and devotion they were equal; but the Princess had the subtler mind. A Frenchwoman by birth, a celebrated beauty, she had been a dancer and circus rider in her youth and made an ideal wife for her adventurous husband. This brave couple now organized the escape to the minutest detail. The guards were bribed, a disguise procured, horses kept ready. In the last moment Maximilian scuttled the scheme. He had asked the foreign envoys to Querétaro. What would they think of him if he ran away from the appointment? Also, there was his beard. Only specimen of its kind between the Rio Grande and Yucatan—or the South Pole for that matter. A ruthless identification. To cut it off? Like an embezzling bank clerk? And then arrive in Europe, among old friends, beardless, with the stamp of defeat and flight right across his face? Never!

Moreover—he rationalized his shrinking from an irrevocable step—the situation was not as desperate as his friends thought. The proceedings against him were a farce, staged by Juarez to satisfy the sensibilities of a theatrical rabble. They would sentence him to exile. It was far more manful, also far wiser, to face the trial, and then depart with flags flying. He planned his future. He was going to write a history of his reign, go on voyages—Naples, Greece, Egypt.

Thus the favourable moment was allowed to pass. The Government grew suspicious and exchanged the guards. The Salms had to start over again. One of the new gaolers, Colonel Villanueva, seemed amenable to suasion. The other, Colonel Palacios, was lackadaisical. The Princess invited him to her rooms. Offered him 100,000 *pesos*. Palacios shook his head. "What, not enough? Take me, then!" She began to throw off her clothes. The colonel jumped out the window.

Maximilian was short of cash. The Salms proposed to the Colonels promissory notes signed by the Emperor. The Mexicans said that was all very well, but would the foreign diplomats please endorse them? With signature and full title. Magnus would do anything; but the others suspected a trap. Baron Lago was in a quandary. Supposing he signed; supposing the crafty greasers staged an exposure—what would his all-highest lord and master in Vienna say? There was a heated discussion. Lago, chidden by his Prussian colleague, affixed his name, repented, moaned. One of the ministers seized a pair of scissors and cut off the signature. The game was up. Next day the ministers and the Salms were ordered to leave Querétaro.

The trial turned out a farce, as Maximilian had anticipated; only in a different sense. The very com-

position of the court-martial was an insult: a lieutenant-colonel presiding over a bench of captains and subalterns, to pass judgment upon an Emperor! But that was not the worst of it. The court sat in the town theatre of Querétaro.

On the stage. Stalls, boxes, pit, packed with an eager crowd. Maximilian refused to appear; the indictment was read, evidence presented, and sentence pronounced in his absence. The bill charged him with promoting foreign invasion, levying war on the people, usurping the supreme power, and with murder. On thousands of counts, committed through the Death Decree. With the Emperor were indicted his generals Miramon, a former Conservative president of the republic, and Mejia. It was a quick affair; the sentence—death by shooting—was a foregone conclusion. The judges simply carried out orders.

Juarez was stormed for clemency. Two hundred women of his capital San Luis de Potosi waited on him and begged for Maximilian's life. Telegrams poured in from all quarters of the globe. Princess Salm threw herself to Juarez's feet. "I am sorry, Madame, to see you on your knees before me," the President said. "Still, were all the kings and queens of Europe in your place I could not spare his life. It is not I who takes it. It is the people and the law, and were I not to carry out their bidding, the people would rise and take his life, and mine as well."

Garibaldi, in a manifesto to the Mexican people, congratulated Juarez on his heroic fight and splendid victory, and begged him to spare Maximilian. The hero of Italian freedom was Juarez's idol; yet his appeal went unheeded.

The death sentence was passed on the morning of

June 16. Maximilian and his two generals were to be shot at 3 P.M. The clock-towers of Querétaro tolled three. Outside, in the courtyard, shrill commands rent the heavy air; hurrying feet pattered on the flags. The firing party tarried. At four o'clock came a telegram from San Luis de Potosi. From the President.

A pardon! No, three days respite. Such was the mercy of Juarez.

XVI

Maximilian would have preferred to die at once. He spent those three days of sinister grace writing letters, disposing of souvenirs, and in meditation.

Hope had departed. And with the waning of its mock radiance a new brightness shone forth in Maximilian's soul. Though *he* did not change, a change took place in him; the sum total of his basic traits remained what it had been, but, focussed no more on life but on death, they acquired, in the language of mathematics, a new sign, were transfigured with a new meaning. His vanity, his hyper-sensitiveness in points of honour, both expressions of lack of self-confidence merging into self-contempt—now projected themselves against the dark wall of extinction as a fearless resolve to die as a Habsburg should. And, while his weaknesses thus were sublimated into strength, all that was fine in him, his tenderness, his generosity, his love of justice, blossomed forth with a new warmth and splendour. In the face of death the child in him grew into a man to die as a hero.

He recognized his tragic error: he sought the right by means of wrong, he willed the good while not resisting evil. He had set out to achieve a work of love, and allowed himself to drift into ways of violence and terror. Therefore he must perish. That he saw clearly; and he

nursed no bitterness toward his conqueror Juarez. Juarez only did what he must do; Juarez was only another name for Fate, for those traits in his own character which destroyed him. In a letter he begged the President to have him shot, but to spare his generals Miramon and Mejia. Let his blood, he wrote, be the last that is shed in this fair unhappy land of Mexico.

He thought of his wife. They had told him that Charlotte was dead; whether the false report had originated in Europe, or whether it was some Juarist officer's notion of a merciful lie, the prospect of joining the beloved one in death sped him in his preparation. On the last day he was informed of the mistake; he thanked God that she was still alive, and in a fervent letter recommended her to the care of the warden of Miramar.

The shadows of the last evening swung heavily under the whitewashed arches of the monastic cell which had been his prison and was now his death chamber. Crucifix on bare table flanked by two candles: standard equipment of poor sinners' last quarters in Mexico. It was like a tomb for living dead, was that thick-walled vault of the Capuchin friars. How odd. In Vienna they buried the Habsburgs in the crypt of the Capuchins. Here he was, living in death for days, for weeks, in the Capuchin crypt of Querétaro. Crypt. Granada. Crown of his ancestors, tried it on, tried to buy it. For shining coin. Not on sale: now he pays with his life. Nephew of Spanish Habsburgs, his blood to pay off old blood debt, wipe off blood shed by captains of Charles V. Cortez. When he landed, blond beard, rosy skin, like himself, Indians in chanting processions hailed him, White Saviour promised by ancient legend. He massacred them: death decree. Atonement. White Saviour now crucified, saviour of Habsburg, sold like

The Death Sentence is Announced to the Emperor Maximilian

Painted by Jean Paul Laurens

Courtesy of Amalthea-Verlag, Vienna-Zürich

Chapultepec Castle

The Thousand-Year-Old Trees of Chapultepec

Courtesy of Amalthea-Verlag, Vienna-Zürich

Saviour, for shining coin. Thirty pieces of silver, received with thanks, Colonel Judas. Lopez. Dark-faced suave Mexican, big handsome he-cat in blood-red jacket. Gave him his own cross for bravery, few hours before he led the Juarists into the Convent of the Cross. Kissed Judas. Before the cock crowed thrice he betrayed him. Lot of trouble Lopez took guarding him on that ride from Vera Cruz. To Vera Cruz: this now is the True Cross. Rode beside his carriage, saw him safe into trap. Like frigate *Novara,* like all carriages, trains, ships before, all took him nearer to trap, nearer to death, like that diligence. Like life: life is a trap trapping the living into death. No escape from life: escorted. That's what escort is for: escort delivery agent of death. Dark-faced, dark-horsed escort dark messenger of death lurking at end of journey. That was also before. Seen. Somewhere. Vienna. Painting. Cavalcade. Dark-faced colonel, dark armour, dark horse riding by litter carrying Wallenstein to death trap at Eger. Colonel Butler, commander of escort, saw him safe to Eger Castle, sent Deveroux and MacDonald to murder him there in dead of night. His ancestor the Emperor Ferdinand had Wallenstein murdered by colonel riding by litter. Now Ferdinand's offspring murdered by another colonel riding by carriage. Revenge for Wallenstein. For Guatemozin, treacherously murdered by Cortez. Ancestors wallowed in blood, in treason; descendant now redeems debt with his blood. Redeemer. Lamb of God taking away world's sins. Lamb of Habsburg. Other Habsburg wolves: he lamb. Taking away Habsburg's sins. His brother a wolf. Crowned executioner, they called him in Italy. Crowned martyr. Die like a man: refused to run away like bank cashier. Blond beard. Still had it. No other in Mexico, Indians dark, no beards. Aztecs.

Human sacrifice: he. Used to kill handsomest prisoner of war as God, took out slaughtered God's heart, ate it. Strange form of Lord's supper. Strange form of heart, strange fruit, pineapple-shaped. Pineapple, basket of pineapple: molten lead, New Year's Eve. So *this* is what it meant. No more New Year's eve. No more pineapple. If he had escaped! With Mejia. Sierra Gorda. Sit in front of Indian hut, little garden, pineapple, animals. Peaceful. Far away. Seen that too. Before. Long ago. Where? Eight years old—no, seven. Birthday. Mother's gift—little garden, wigwam, real Indian implements, animals, in garden, tropical plants, pineapple. Thorny fruit. Mother. Dolorous mother, heart pierced seven swords. Like God's mother. Thorny crown. Crown of thorns like our Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

Somebody was sobbing. He awoke from deep sleep. Father Soria, his confessor. Doctor Basch, good little Jew, drenching his hands with tears, kissing. In the doorway, bluish light of morning, soldiers.

"Gentlemen, I am ready."

XVII

Through empty streets, between rows of shuttered houses, the procession wound its way toward the Cerro de la Campana. Three carts, one for each of the doomed, dressed in black. With each rode a priest. Infantry with glittering bayonets, officers on horseback. Muffled drums. A lone woman running behind, with bared breasts, shrieking, wailing, clinging to one of the carts. In her arms a baby. It took six men to drag her away. She fell, rose, ran on. Mejia's young wife.

They halted in a hollow square of four thousand men. It was the meadow where, a month ago, Maximilian had surrendered. The three men in black coats

dismounted. The Emperor, his head erect, his step firm, brushed the dust off his clothes, then turned to the soldiers of the firing party: "All I ask you, boys, is to aim straight at my heart." His voice was clear. He gave each man an ounce of gold.

The lieutenant who commanded the party approached the Emperor. His face was deadly white. Choking, he begged Maximilian to forgive him.

"My son," Maximilian smiled, "a soldier must obey his orders. I thank you for your sympathy."

He then turned to the Generals, and embraced one after the other. "We shall soon meet in another world," he said. He took Miramon by the hand. "General, a hero should have the precedence of a monarch. I yield you the place of honour." He led him into the centre, and stepped to the right. Miramon, like Maximilian, was calm and bore his head high; old Mejia, stunned by the last sight of his wife and child, was hardly conscious, and had to be supported.

Maximilian then came forward a little and spoke.

> "Mexicans! Men of my kind are destined by Providence to be either the redeemers of their peoples, or else their martyrs. I came to you with the purest intentions, invited by high-minded men, like those who share death with me today. On the threshold of the world beyond I am comforted by the thought that I have always acted for the best as it was given to me, and that I am not abandoned by my beloved and faithful Generals. May my blood be the last to be shed, and may it bring peace and happiness to my unhappy adopted fatherland."

His voice rang far and clear like a bell. He was beautiful—a young god. He stepped back and pointed at

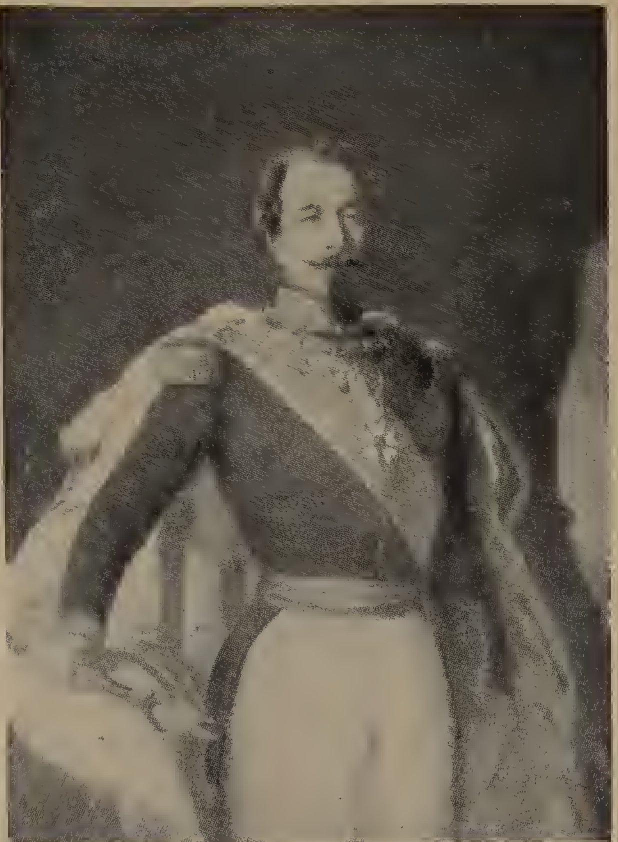
his heart. A glint from a dropping sword. Volley. He fell, face forward.

The young lieutenant strode to the black prostrate thing. There was a twitch or two in it. The lieutenant turned it with his sword, drew a pistol, and shot it through the heart.

The soldiers in the square wept.

XVIII

On the eighteenth day of August, in the year 1867, the thirty-seventh birthday of the Emperor Francis Joseph was celebrated with great pomp at Salzburg. The charming old archiepiscopal city donned its festive best to furnish a worthy background for the meeting of that monarch with his dear friend and brother the Emperor of the French. Eight years had passed since Francis Joseph and Napoleon had faced each other in the parlour of the village inn at Villafranca. A great change had come over the world. They were friends now, the one-time enemies, and they hoped to be allies. Francis Joseph forgot that Napoleon had wrested Lombardy from him. Lombardy! Snows of yesteryear! Now Venetia was gone, too; and, a hundred times worse, gone was the supremacy in Germany. A year ago, on the field of Königgrätz, the banners of the House of Austria were trodden into the dust by the victorious hosts of Hohenzollern. For six hundred years the first among German princes, the Habsburg Emperor has ceased to be one. That proud place was now usurped, in fact, if not yet in name, by the upstart King of Prussia. Prussia was the enemy now. On that beflagged and garlanded August morning Francis Joseph's thirst for revenge and Napoleon's fear embraced and kissed each other on the platform of the Salzburg railway station.



The Emperor Napoleon III of France

Courtesy of Amalthea-Verlag, Vienna-Zürich

The Empress Eugénie

Painted by F. X. Winterhalter

Arrival of the Emperor Maximilian's Body at Trieste

Painted by Cesare dell' Acqua

Courtesy of Amalthea-Verlag, Vienna-Zürich

Napoleon brought Eugénie, and the Empress Elizabeth, recently reunited to her husband after years of estrangement, was a most gracious hostess, no less beautiful and more stately than the sprightly daughter of Spain. When the scheduled exuberance of the greeting gave out, for a few minutes a slight embarrassment prevailed, as in the presence of an unbidden guest. Francis Joseph and Napoleon looked into each other's eyes, and each knew that the other knew what he was thinking. Maximilian. You did it. Then mumbled words of polite condolence,—destiny, irreparable loss, inscrutable will of God. A shadow passed. They sighed—regret, relief. That was that. They talked of other, more important, things.

Napoleon returned to Paris. Francis Joseph returned to Vienna. The business of Empire called. In the forests around Ischl autumn wove its purple and gold and russet pattern into summer's green gobelin. Eastward across the dark blue expanse of the Atlantic raced the Imperial frigate *Novara*, flags half mast, a crowned hearse for cargo. From the heights around Ischl came the roaring of stags. Love-song, war-song, death-song of stags. Francis Joseph grew restless. He wrote to his cousin and best friend, the Crown Prince Albert of Saxony, and announced that "even in this year of sorrow and mourning" he was going to shoot in the mountains of Ischl from September 25 to October 12. Both he and Sisi would be delighted to see Albert there, and even though the party "has been bereft by the death of the best shot and most faithful friend," there was no reason why they should not have a good time.

Gackel,[1] the Emperor continued, was expected to arrive a little later from Bayrisch Zell, where he was shooting stags in the grounds he rented after Maximilian.

[1] The Duke Charles Theodore of Bavaria, the Empress Elizabeth's brother.

CHAPTER XV

RECOIL

I

"It has been, alas! found inevitable to sever the greatest part of Lombardy from the body of the Empire. On the other hand, it cannot but cheer My heart once more to see secured for My peoples the blessings of Peace, doubly cherished by Me as they will allow Me the leisure requisite to devote henceforth My undivided attention and care to the successful solution of the task that has devolved upon Me: to wit, laying the lasting foundations for the inner prosperity and external strength of Austria through appropriate development of its rich spiritual and material resources as well as through timely improvement of legislation and of the constitution."

Thus Francis Joseph, in his manifesto of July 15, 1859 —three weeks after the blow of Solferino, four days after the bitter cup of Villafranca,—wrote off his conscience the errors of a decade. A decade that was one uninterrupted error. It was an avowal of guilt, unusually bare for any monarch, triply so for Francis Joseph, claimant of divine irresponsibility, preserver of divine appearances. For the "lasting foundations of prosperity and strength," the "appropriate development of spiritual and material

resources" were nothing but the second edition of the "salutary reorganization and rejuvenation of the monarchy" advertised by Francis Joseph's Proclamation of December 2, 1848. And the "timely improvement of legislation and of the constitution" was but a vague generic term for the "equal franchise, equality before the law, participation of the people's representatives in the task of legislation" specified in the earlier document.

The pledge of Francis Joseph's day of accession, fulfilled on paper by the March Constitution of 1849, was broken in fact within less than two years. An era of blood and iron despotism, more efficient and much more inhuman than the old, followed. Its promoters depicted an Empire made uniform, obedient, strong, prosperous, German, responding to the faintest vibration of a central all-pervading Will. The device of crediting all initiative to the Emperor turned all criticism, all signs of discontent into the crime of *lèse-majesté*, and thus warded off disclosure year by year. The tyranny of the police produced the illusion of calm. The French guns at Magenta and Solferino shot the deception to pieces. Francis Joseph was awakened to reality by the people of Austria cheering the victory of the Empire's enemies.

He knew that the people were bad. Still, something that was not in and of the people must be radically wrong too. They—his ministers, his informers, his generals even—had been feeding him on a diet of lies. A decade of Bach had made the State neither strong nor obedient. A decade of Kempen had not made the State safe. A decade of the System landed him at Villafranca at Napoleon's feet. The charge of the French guards before Solferino did more than rout the Austrian centre. It routed Francis Joseph out of his hitherto impregnable fortress of self-certainty. It drove him to take refuge in

the first abstraction of his life. It was not enough to punish guilty individuals. The vaunted System of centralization, standardization, Germanization, had to be punished. The System had to go.

A few days after the battle of Solferino the new Imperial Minister of Foreign Affairs, Count Rechberg—he had just succeeded the "Minister of Misfortune," Count Buol,—hurried from headquarters back to the capital, called on Baron Bach, and requested him to resign. Bach complied. He was happy to learn that the avenging angel's next visit smote his arch enemy, rival, and supervisor, the Police Minister Baron Kempen.

Austrian breasts heaved with a sigh of relief. A great change was at hand—that much was clear. Was it to be a change for the better this time—an unprecedented occurrence in Austrian history? The programme of the new ministry, announced in the wake of the Imperial manifesto, seemed to offer an earnest. It projected provincial home rule and diets endowed with extensive powers, municipal autonomy, and other overdue reforms. If the Imperial proclamation echoed that of the accession in December, 1848, the ministerial schedule struck tones strongly reminiscent of Schwarzenberg's lofty *début* of November 27 of that year.

Indeed, the era of absolute rule appeared to have come to an end. It was high time. "The word Constitution," said the Governor of Lower Austria, "is, as in 1848, on everybody's lips." Everybody's: even the Emperor's. His manifesto fairly resounded with constitutionalism. The optimists—and Austrians usually turn optimists after a disaster, taking the view that the worst is over—cheered. What the optimists did not know was that in the privacy of the council chamber Francis Joseph used the word Constitution in a different

context. He told his new ministers that "the constitutional fancies must be opposed."

The formula under which the public effusion and the secret instruction could be brought together was simple. A change of system was needed. Something different. Something that looked like a constitution. But not exactly a constitution.

II

The Count Agenor Goluchowski, Minister of Interior in the new Cabinet, was the vessel in which these paradoxical ingredients ideally mixed. To begin with, he was the opposite of Bach. He belonged to the powerful clique of Galician junkers who, immensely wealthy, immensely haughty, formed a kind of feudal state within the state. He was a Slav, an aristocrat, and a federalist. Still, one point he and the father of discredited Centralism had in common. Count Goluchowski, too, was a dyed-in-the-wool Catholic ultramontane.

The meaning of his appointment could not be misconstrued. On the surface it signified abandonment of the policy of forcible Germanization and allowing the peoples of the monarchy a share, however moderate, in government, as well as free scope in developing their racial and national personalities. In its deeper reality it portended that Francis Joseph sought to satisfy the popular demand for political progress by a powerful push backward. Goluchowski was a federalist. But his federalism derived not from the peoples but from the feudal estates. It was directed not against Imperial encroachment but against bureaucratic levelling. It was a federalism along the lines, not of Mazzini, but of Metternich and Windischgraetz. He announced the necessity of reorganizing the Empire on the basis of "historic-political

units." This was the conventional polite term for the cliques of great landed proprietors banded together in the old provincial assemblies. It was part and parcel of the official political creed of pre-March Austria.

This doctrine was anti-German by necessity. The Germans formed a minority of the population. They could maintain their ascendency by their superior culture and wealth only in a unified state. If Galicia, Bohemia, Moravia, and the South Slav provinces were to be treated as separate "historic-political units," that meant that they would be ruled by the Slavs and for the Slavs. Slav aspirations, roused by the ascent of nationalism since the French Revolution, crystallized by the events of 1848, were now exalted into Governmental policy. Already the Czechs celebrated the impending revival of their ancient kingdom.

The first step toward granting a constitution that was not a constitution was the creation of the so-called *Verstärkter Reichsrath*, or enlarged Senate. This was old Baron Kübeck's advisory board of lawyers and experts, originally launched as a counterweight to an all-powerful Ministry. It was to retain its purely consultative character, but in addition to the Senators appointed for life by the Emperor it was to include provincial representatives, chosen similarly by the Emperor, but from a panel of alternates elected by the diets. As the diets consisted of the nobility, the new Senate was in reality a debating society of feudal lords and high officials.

That rivalry of German and Slav, with the Germans representing the liberal-centralistic Josephine tradition and the rising industrial bourgeosie of the big cities, and the Slavs standing for federalism, feudal privilege and Catholic clericalism, which had divided the unhappy Reichstag of 1848, marked also the proceedings of the

Enlarged Senate of 1860. It was to remain, with slight modifications, the fundamental issue of Austrian politics unto the end. The principal spokesmen of the feudal-federal tendency in the Senate were the chiefs of the great Czech clans and a small but gifted group of Hungarian nobles who called themselves Old Conservatives and who combined a fervent Magyar nationalism with super-loyalty to the Emperor born from the reflection that Imperial power was the best ally of feudal privilege against the awakening masses of Hungary.

It was a strange partnership, this *entente* of Czech junkers and Magyar magnates. It proved that while blood may be thicker than water, class is thicker than blood. For in Hungary the principle of historic-political units was invoked on the one hand against the Germanizing and centralizing ambitions of the Viennese bureaucracy, and on the other against the champions of Slovak, Roumanian and Croat racial rights—exponents of the Mazzinian creed, forerunner of Wilsonian self-determination. Thus the principle which in Austria was worked by the Slavs against the Germans, was in Hungary exploited by the Magyars against the Slavs.

The Fortified Senate was conceived as a preliminary. Time went by in the passionate squabble which seemed to become the standard form of political proceedings in Austria. The Senators quarrelled, bargained, quarrelled again; the Government evaded and postponed; the new Constitution remained unborn. At last the Emperor broke the deadlock. On October 21, 1860, he was to leave for Warsaw to meet the Czar and the King of Prussia. The most burning problem of the day, the Italian question, was to be discussed. Francis Joseph realized the importance of appearing at the *rendez-vous* as the ruler of a consolidated and contented Empire. In

twenty-four hours twenty decrees were drawn up. In the evening Count Rechberg summoned to the Foreign Office the Magyar magnates, who had been peremptorily called to Vienna by telegraph. They had just arrived, and had not even had time to brush their clothes. The Hungarians listened attentively to what they thought was a tentative draft, and when the Minister finished reading it they remarked that they would now go home to Budapest and discuss it. "Discuss what?" demanded the Count. "This document will be published tomorrow morning in the Vienna *Gazette* and will be posted in all cities of the Empire. It is the new Constitution."

Thus the "Charter of October" was ushered into this world, begotten by heedless hurry out of procrastination. It described itself as the "permanent and irrevocable" basic law of the realm. It glorified the Metternichian conception of feudal federalism, laying down as its guiding principle the idea that

> "only such institutions and laws may furnish the necessary safeguards for the power and authority of the Empire as bear account equally of the historic consciousness and actual divergences of the various kingdoms and provinces on the one hand, and of their indivisible and inseparable union on the other."

This lofty if complicated aim was to be achieved through endowing the provincial assemblies with a wide scope of home rule, and reserving only certain matters and functions such as foreign affairs, defence, customs, commerce, and communications, to the central Senate. In theory this was not a bad plan, and it is quite conceivable that in practice it might have developed into those "lasting foundations" of which the Emperor's manifesto

had so eloquently spoken. The trouble with the Charter of October was not that it was federalistic, but that it was a sham. For the provincial assemblies upon which its accent lay were not real lawgiving bodies representing the people, but a warmed-up hash of feudal left-overs from the pre-March day before yesterday. One of their principal statutory rights consisted in wearing the gold-braided scarlet swallow-tail coats and white pantaloons of the Franciscan dispensation.

The true inwardness of the October Charter was that it was intended as a sop and a bait for the Hungarians. Just as Schwarzenberg's centralistic constitution of March, 1849, amounted to an implicit confiscation of the legal independence of Hungary, Goluchowski's Charter involved a return to the status quo without express acknowledgment. It was a shrewd and necessary proviso; for the Emperor might change his mind once more, in which case a solemn *restitutio in integrum* would be the source of embarrassment.

In Vienna the new Charter was hailed with enthusiasm. It undoubtedly aimed a deadly blow at the supremacy of the German bourgeoisie; but after their brief and disastrous excursion into active politics in 1848 the Viennese resumed their charming non-political habits which provided for matters of the State only two potential modes of expression, both equally harmless, that of grumbling, in which they indulged a good deal, and of cheering, which in their hearts they preferred, but which they had little opportunity to practise. No wonder, then, that they welcomed the first pretext, however slender, for civic happiness. Long pent-up love of fun and good-natured levity placed rows of lighted candles in the windows of the German city of Vienna to celebrate the defeat of the German idea in Austria.

III

The delusion, such as it was, did not last long. The Hungarians were not placated. The measure of home rule which the new basic law granted might have satisfied them after their national disaster in 1849; now, after Solfèrino, they, not unreasonably, expected more. To them it seemed that Francis Joseph, defeated, came forward with the generous gesture of the victor. The new constitution, if it deserved that name, was at once too federalistic and not federalistic enough; for while it encouraged the Croats to regard their country—in the Magyar view a conquered province—as a separate "historic-political unit," it also provided for a single parliament for Austria proper and Hungary. To be represented in the Reichsrath was, to the vast majority of Hungarians, equivalent to the surrender of nationhood. The Old Conservatives who supported the Charter had no right to speak for Hungary; they were a small group of nobles who strove to entrench feudal privilege behind a close union with the Court. The Hungarian people demanded nothing less than restoration of the laws of 1848. They demanded it in the very municipal assemblies convoked under the Charter. In many counties Garibaldi, Mazzini, Cavour and Napoleon III were gravely elected as delegates; they did not occupy their seats, but the gesture was impressive.

No less worrying was the attitude of the Bourse. One of the chief arguments of those advisers of the Crown who had promoted the Charter was that international finance favoured a constitutional régime. As a prop to State credit, however, the Charter proved a flat failure. Treasury bonds chased downhill wildly; the currency dropped

forty per cent. below par—lower even than in Solferino days.

These were aggravating results; but the fact that brought home to the Emperor that he had made a mistake was the reaction in Germany. The victory of the Italian national cause gave a powerful impetus to the movement for German unity; at the same time Austrian defeat stirred those who regarded the Habsburg Empire as the main obstacle to consolidation and staked their hopes on Prussian leadership. The Charter of October, by placing the monarchy under the virtual control of the Slavs, provided the pro-Prussian party with a most convenient argument. Even in Southern and Middle Germany, hitherto the strongholds of pro-Austrian sentiment, the advocates of the *Kleindeutsch* solution—a German federal state from which Austria was excluded—gained ground.

Francis Joseph drew his conclusions with a swiftness that for once was decidedly more Josephine than Franciscan. In December, 1860, Count Goluchowski, chief underwriter of the federalistic and pro-Slav course, was dropped just as abruptly as he had been exalted to power. His successor as *Staatsminister* was Anton von Schmerling.

The name itself was a banner unfurled. For Schmerling was the acknowledged leader of the *Grossdeutsch* party which demanded German unification under Austrian primacy; he possessed greater authority in Germany than any other Austrian statesman. An adherent of the old Josephine liberal-centralistic school, he looked back upon a distinguished and honourable record. Emerging from the most moderate wing of the reform party of 1848, he was President of the short-lived German Government at Frankfort; later he was Minister of Justice in Schwarzenberg's cabinet, but resigned when he found that he could not reconcile his conscience to the Premier's un-

scrupulous and autocratic ways. He had never been a radical like Bach; he believed in law and order maintained by authority; and it was only the extreme unenlightenment of the pre-March despots that drove this typical partisan of enlightened despotism into the camp of constitutional reform.

Two months after Schmerling's appointment the Government came forward with a new constitution—the so-called Imperial Patent of February, 1861. It replaced the "irrevocable and permanent" Charter of October, 1860. For the second time within four months Vienna illuminated; for the second time within four months, sneered the North German dramatist Hebbel, Austria entered the ranks of constitutional states.

The most conspicuous feature of the new basic law was that it was the opposite of the old one. The guilty provisions of that unhappy document were punished by the enactment of their antipodes. The federal idea was abolished. There were to be no more historic-political units. There was to be a strong central Government and a central parliament—a real legislature this time, endowed with the power of supplies—for the whole Empire, including Hungary. Centralism of the Stadion-Bach type once more superseded Metternichian federalism. And once more the German character of Austria was underscored. Once more the German bureaucracy and bourgeoisie were to assume control of the State. In order to assure this control to a minority a highly complicated franchise, based on a property and educational census, and combining geographical constituencies with professional representation, was resorted to. This was the so-called curial suffrage, under which four classes of constituents elected deputies on the basis, not of numbers, but of importance: the large landowners, the chambers of

commerce, the burgesses of towns, and the rural districts. In reality this was a form of plural voting whereby a handful of German merchants in a Bohemian town, for instance, had the same representation as a few thousand Czech peasants in the surrounding country.

The Patent of February revealed with pathetic clarity the tangle of paradoxes underlying Austrian politics. Most fatal of these was that as the bearers of the liberal idea in Austria were the Germans, and as the Germans formed a minority of the population, a liberal régime could be imposed only by force, open or disguised. This fact vitiated liberal policy itself; it branded liberalism as something unpopular and esoteric, at the best a kind of remedy that may be salutary but is certainly painful; at the worst, masqueraded tyranny.

This contradiction enclosed a whole sequence of others, like a Chinese trick box. In the first place, liberalism in Austria proper was hopelessly at odds with liberalism in Hungary. Indeed, the same term designated two entirely different ideas in the two halves of the realm. In Austria liberalism rooted in pre-revolutionary enlightenment; it was doctrinaire, levelling, centralizing, anti-historical, anti-national: a panacea dispensed from above. In Hungary liberalism stood for home rule, historic continuity, constitutional evolution; it was empirical and non-dogmatic; it was thoroughly national, in the Hungarian sense which identified nation with nobility, the non-nobles being termed *plebs;* it was thus intensely aristocratic, the product of perennial *fronde.*

It followed that the two brands of liberalism had two kinds of enemy. In Austria the anti-liberal forces were marshalled by the large landed proprietors who, ensconced in their provincial assemblies, allied themselves with the racial aspirations of the Slavs—Czechs and Poles—in

promoting federalism; they ardently supported, and were supported by, the Roman Catholic church, and by the military reactionaries of the Court. In Hungary, on the other hand, historic Magyar liberalism had to meet the onslaught of the awakening non-Magyar races whose leaders derived their theories from the French Revolution and from Mazzini, but who in practice made common cause with the Emperor against the Magyars. Thus in Austria liberalism was combated by counter-revolution pure and simple; in Hungary, by revolution neither pure nor simple, but one which compromised with, and was in the end cheated by, Imperial despotism. As is often the case, extremes combined against the middle; and in 1849 the Imperial Field Marshal Windischgraetz in Hungary fought side by side with those Slovak, Roumanian and Croat nationalists whose spiritual brethren the Imperial Field Marshal Radetzky was trampling down in Italy.

From the irresponsible comfort of historic retrospect it is clear that the only solution for the fundamental problem of the Austrian Empire would have been one combining a strong central authority with the maximum of autonomy, not for historic units, as those were a disguise for feudal interests, but for racial groups—a kind of cantonal organization on the Swiss pattern, with an efficient but responsible federal executive. Such a scheme, an almost ideal one, was actually blundered into by the unhappy Kremsier Parliament just before it was chased home by Schwarzenberg's grenadiers in March, 1849. That scheme possessed many merits, yet it was destroyed by one defect: it was anti-historic and a-historic, a mere brain product which ignored the organic life arrayed against it.

Above all, the Kremsier constitution sinned against the fundamental fact of Austrian history: the fact that

Austria was an autocratic state not by accident, but by genetic necessity, where the centrifugal tendencies were balanced not by inner cohesion, but by imposed force; that, in the last analysis, the Austrian Empire was merely another name for the force which prevented it from falling apart. It was a sound instinct which prompted the rulers of Austria, and Francis Joseph in particular, to cherish the army above all other institutions; it was profound intuitive tact, and not just poetic phrase, which sang in Grillparzer's famous evocation of Radetzky's army: "In deinem Lager ist Oesterreich." Yes, Radetzky's camp *was* Austria. On the day when the camp finally disbanded Austria ceased to exist.

Thus Francis Joseph's refusal to accept the solution of Kremsier and become the crowned figurehead of a federal democracy, a kind of Swiss president in purple, pierces the temporal shell of the counter-revolutionary intrigue of a few generals and a schoolboy's admiring subservience to a dashing and masterful old man's counsel, and grows into a grandiose symbol of Austrian fate. The methods which he subsequently employed in trying to stem the tide of democratic nationalism were grounded in the accidents of his character; the fact that he tried was grounded in deepest necessity. Yet for the Austrian Empire those very accidents—his incapacity for finding the golden mean, his lack of true generosity, his inability for steadfast choice—determined the particular form in which its fate was to realize itself. The terrible efficacy of faith stands here revealed: the age-old human belief in the divinity of kingship endowed it with an almost-divine power which survived, for a brief span, even after the foundations of the belief itself had crumbled.

The schoolboy Emperor had been started off by his schoolmaster Premier along the line of German centralism

maintained by bayonets; when the schoolmaster died the pupil, every time he faced an emergency, tried to recall all the rules he had memorized, and to solve the problem by the rule that seemed to fit best. He adhered to the prescribed course as long as he could; when everything snapped he let go and swung to the other extreme like a pendulum released. He adopted the opposite system to punish the guilty one; he resorted to reform to stop the mouths of critics who had found their voices in the din of disaster. When he found that the new system—pro-Slav federalism—did not work either, he did not correct the error by small empirical swervings, but by a dogmatic, 180-degree face-about: by returning into the old rut. Lack of imagination was the besetting sin of his intellect. He did not, like a cautious navigator, feel his way into new and disturbing exigencies, but tried to slam his way through; he did not strive to understand a new difficulty, but to abolish it by force; he approached a novel situation as something external and hostile—not as a task but as an enemy. At the bottom of it all was his infinite egotism, disguised but not effaced by a no less infinite sense of duty which in reality was a sense of duty toward himself and nobody and nothing else. He did not, in his heart, seek to remedy a public evil; he worked fourteen hours a day to restore his own private comfort. His *Weltanschauung* was static; he was an anomaly, a misfit, in an eminently dynamic age.

IV

The new Parliament was no more of a success than its predecessor. To begin with, its ranks showed considerable gaps. The Hungarians stayed at home. They held that the Patent violated the integrity of the Crown of St. Stephen, as Transylvania and Croatia, in their view

mere administrative districts, were to send their own delegations. The Croats, on the other hand, were offended because their dream of a Greater Illyria, uniting all South Slavs of the Empire, the expected reward of Jellačić's loyalty, had not materialized. The Serbs of South Hungary were fuming because their province, the Voyvodina, was reincorporated with Hungary. The Czechs marched up in a man-eating mood, brandishing the scalping-knives of their oratory at Schmerling, arch-centralist, arch-Germanizer, arch-enemy of Czech historic rights.

Trouble was brewing on all sides. But the worst trouble remained Hungary; it was growing worse daily. Schmerling typified some of both the best and the worst traits of German character. He was honest and sincere, unswervingly loyal to his principles; but his principles were deduced from ideal postulates, and had nothing to do with such base sordid things as facts. He was a doctrinaire of the purest water; *fiat theoria, pereat mundus* might have been his motto. He hammered ceaselessly into hard Hungarian heads his dogma that by the rebellion of 1848 Hungary had forfeited her ancient constitution, and anything that the Emperor now offered her was in the nature of a free gift. This may have been so, or may not; but Schmerling refused to talk business with the Hungarians unless they agreed to his first premise; the Hungarians refused to agree; and the deadlock was complete.

Among the many fine qualities of a typical German tact is not conspicuous. Schmerling managed to rub the proud Magyars the wrong way all the time. Once one of their leaders, Baron Joseph Eötvös, called on him. Eötvös was one of the finest statesmen of his nation; a sterling character, a man of truly European vision, an accomplished writer, a genuine liberal in the English

sense. Withal, a *grand seigneur* in everything but appearance; he was small and slight of build, and shy of manner. Schmerling, tall, angular, overbearing, meant to reduce the conversation to the proper plane by addressing his guest condescendingly as "my dear Eötvös." Accustomed to the Byzantine genuflexions of Austrian officialdom, the omnipotent *Staatsminister* was dumbfounded when the little Magyar talked up to him as "my dear Schmerling." He next conveyed a polite hint by styling his visitor "Your Excellency." Whereupon Eötvös, unperturbed: "I am no more your Excellency than I am your dear Eötvös." "Very well, *Herr Baron*," countered Schmerling, and the palaver proceeded in the conventional grooves of continental courtesy.

The Hungarian diet which had been summoned to elect representatives to the central parliament, but refused to do so, turned out to be a hotbed of disloyalism, and had to be dissolved in six months. Rebellion all but burst; Hungarian leaders coquetted with Napoleon, corresponded with Garibaldi, and conferred with Kossuth in his exile; agitators sneaked in, emissaries sneaked out; there were rumours of large shipments of arms being smuggled into the country from Italy. Thereupon Schmerling proclaimed martial law, and appointed General Count Palffy, one of the grimmest of Austrian commanders, as Governor. Palffy made his *début* by announcing a régime of blood and iron. Six months of Schmerlingian liberalism landed Hungary where she had been ten years before under Schwarzenberg's counter-revolution.

As a matter of fact, while Austrian historians usually make much of Schmerling's constitutionalism, their Hungarian colleagues fail to discover any difference between his administration and that of his predecessors, and

treat the period as the extension of Bach's famous System. Clearly the Magyar spokesmen are wrong; for while the bayonets of Bach were those of counter-revolution, the bayonets of Schmerling were those of pre-revolutionary enlightened despotism. By neglecting to distinguish between the Bonapartist and Josephine brands, and vulgarly insisting that bayonets are bayonets, the Hungarians exhibit a lamentable want of historic sense.

V

Complications in foreign politics are for an Emperor sometimes what a flirtation with another woman is for a harassed husband. They afford diversion from domestic worry. It was almost with a sigh of relief that toward the end of 1862 Francis Joseph plunged into the difficulties of the German Confederation. Encouraged by Austrian defeat in Italy and the contingent shrinking of Austrian prestige in Middle and South Germany, the Prussian Government was reviving its agitation for the old plan of a closer union of the German states without the Habsburg Empire.

It was just eleven years ago that Schwarzenberg brought Prussia on its knees at Olmütz. Prussian patriots were still smarting under that memory; and it seemed that the time had come to redress the wrong. The balance of physical power between the two states had not, indeed, changed; yet the general situation had greatly improved in Prussia's favour. In the first place, Schwarzenberg was no more. It took a man like that cynical old Prince, with his poker face and poker tactics, to play a bad hand like Austria's so well. Now his steely resolve was gone; and there was a man at Berlin who saw through

the brazen bluff that replaced it. In September, 1862, Count Otto von Bismarck became Premier of Prussia.

At the outset of his career Bismarck, then just a typical Prussian junker with the stock ideals and stock prejudices of his class bred into his bones, was not implacably hostile to Austria. With his unerring sense of proportion he perceived that the potential resources of the Danubian Empire were vastly superior to those of the barren Prussian Kingdom with its strategically impossible frontiers and its overworked population. He was prepared to bargain with facts, to compromise with the senior rival, to accept a solution of the German problem whereby Austria and Prussia would divide the leadership of the Bund. It was the fatuous pride and obstinacy of the Austrian Government which turned him into an intransigent enemy. It was usually the fate of those who tried to bring Austria to reason; they ended by striving to destroy her.

His plan was forming. His goal was Prussian supremacy in Germany; his point of departure, the recognition that Prussia was weaker than her opponent. Means and procedure had to be adjusted. It was necessary to isolate Austria; then to provoke a quarrel and goad her into the rôle of aggressor; then to hit out quick and hard—to make up for deficient bulk by sureness of aim and speed of delivery. In a war—and Bismarck saw no other way out—Prussia had to conquer at the first stroke, or be conquered.

The statesman who at the time of Bismarck's rise to power directed the foreign affairs of Austria was in no way his match. Like five out of six previous incumbents in the past half century, Count Bernhard von Rechberg was a foreigner, descendant of an ancient and wealthy Swabian house; like his immediate predecessor Buol he

had grown up in the Metternichian school of high diplomacy; unlike Buol, he was no fool. He possessed both intelligence and character. Fifty-three years of age at the time of his succession, he had a brilliant career behind him; he had served with credit in various ambassadorial posts, acted as civilian deputy-governor under Radetzky's military administration in Italy; then he became head of the Austrian delegation, and thus president of the German Federal Council, at Frankfort. In this capacity he crossed swords with the Prussian Delegate Bismarck—more than once metaphorically, and once, almost, literally: they came within an ace of fighting a duel. Officially enemies, Bismarck conceived sincere respect for Rechberg's integrity, and later, in his memoirs, spoke highly of him. The Austrian statesman combined a violent temperament and flaring-up temper with remarkable moderation in policy. He had some ingredients of Josephinism in his makeup; an absolutist in politics, he was an authoritarian, but not an ultramontane, in religion. He called himself a political Catholic, and in private life affected Voltairian attitudes; once he remarked to a visitor that had he been Procurator at Jerusalem he might not have crucified Christ, but he certainly would have sent him to gaol for a good stiff term as a dangerous agitator.

Pro-Prussian historians attribute his rise to his bitter hostility to Prussia; he regarded, one of them remarks, worrying Prussia as his life's task. The *Grossdeutsch* partisans on the other hand accused him of lack of firmness in his dealings with Berlin. The contradiction is easily explained. Rechberg pursued the true Metternichian line of preserving the Prussian alliance on the basis of the treaties of 1815. He did his best to keep Prussia in the second place, but at the same time to keep her friendly.

Indeed, Rechberg was in every sense the authentic depositary of Metternichian statesmanship, as he had been the old Chancellor's closest personal friend. Their intimacy dated from the stormy days of 1848 when Rechberg organized the flight of Metternich's family abroad, and accompanied them in person; he was present when the news of Magenta smote the old man down.

Rechberg was guided by one idea: that of preserving the Europe of 1815, in which Austria, supported by her second, Prussia, presided over a loosely-knit German confederation, and guarded her hegemony in Italy. He realized that any change of the status quo fixed by the Congress of Vienna worked against Austria, for it worked necessarily in the line of that national fulfilment of which Austria was the negation. Thus the clue of his policy of compromising and temporizing with Prussia, so obscure and inconsistent to contemporary eyes, was to be found in Italy. Prussia must be cajoled so that Venetia might be saved. This policy was not vigour incarnate; but it was not unintelligent; given his task and his limitations, it is by no means certain whether he was not, from the point of view of the system he defended, pursuing the wisest course—making the most of a bad job.

For the moment Rechberg encountered his greatest difficulties not at Berlin, but at Vienna. For the policy of the Austrian Foreign Minister was not the policy of the Austrian Foreign Office; and the Emperor supported the Foreign Office against the Foreign Minister. That the policy of the Foreign Office toward Germany was the *Grossdeutsch* policy of the Minister of State Schmerling did not mean that Schmerling chose the policy; it meant rather that the policy chose Schmerling. The *spiritus rector* of this policy was a subordinate official at the Foreign Office, Baron Biegeleben.

Like his nominal superior Rechberg, Biegeleben was no Austrian. He was a native of Hesse, a fanatical Catholic and a fanatical enemy of Prussia. Assisted by two other members of the Foreign Office staff, Baron Meysenbug and Max von Gagern, Hessians like himself, ultramontanes like himself, Biegeleben managed the German policy of the Government with almost dictatorial power. His integrity of character and sincerity of purpose were above doubt; but his vision was blurred, his sense of reality distorted, by the violence of his passions. A brilliant writer and talker, he presented his darkest prejudices in the shining robes of reason; his arguments carried great weight with those who wished to reach his conclusions. Foremost of these was the Emperor Francis Joseph. The mantle of Schwarzenberg and Grünne seemed to have descended upon this humble *Hofrath*.

The *Staatsminister* was his ally. Schmerling realized that Biegeleben hated Prussia more than he loved Greater Germany; but the two met in their antagonism to the Foreign Minister; and the latter found himself thwarted on every turn.

In that ruthless logic of character which is called Fate it was inevitable that Francis Joseph, whose inherited distrust of his ministers perpetuated his grandfather's system of playing out one against the other, should sooner or later conspire, as it were, with a subordinate official of a department against its head. The natural corollary of the ministerial duels Schwarzenberg-Kübeck, Kübeck-Bach, Bach-Kempen, Hess-Buol—all traceable to the archetype Metternich *vs.* Kolowrat—was the departmental duel Rechberg-Biegeleben. If Francis Joseph preferred the aggressive *Grossdeutsch* course of Biegeleben to the cautious status quo course of Rechberg, in all common sense he should have dismissed Rechberg and appoint-

ed Biegeleben to Foreign Minister. But the pathological worry for security which lay at the bottom of Francis Joseph's dual system does not operate by common sense. He did not completely trust either. Did he dismiss both? No. He kept both. He did not know which line he really preferred, because he was not sure which was safer and more profitable; so he played with both at the same time. In his heart Biegeleben's counsel pleased him better; but he refused to be at the mercy of even his own preferences, and he sought Rechberg's moral support against committing himself too far with Biegeleben.

VI

Such was the situation that confronted Julius Froebel when he, early in the spring of 1863, came to Vienna to occupy his new post as chief publicist and adviser on German affairs to the Foreign Office. It was a strange, a dramatic, return; for it was just a little over fourteen years ago that Froebel, then a deputy of the Frankfort Parliament, awaited the Prince Windischgraetz's firing party in the military prison of the Austrian capital. With his colleague Robert Blum he had been caught in the whirl of the October Revolution; they both served in the national guards, were taken prisoners when the Imperialists took the city, and were sentenced to death for high treason and rebellion. Blum was executed; Froebel, to his intense astonishment, received a pardon, was instantly escorted across the Saxon frontier, and freed. That miraculous escape was the prelude to a life full of romance. When the hopes of German liberals collapsed he, like so many others, emigrated to the United States. He lived in the Middle West and Southwest, strayed to Mexico, gambled in real estate, prospected for gold, fought Indians and brigands. He saved some money, returned to the old

country and achieved prominence as a writer and advocate of German national unity. He conceived the idea that the Austrian Emperor should call a congress of all German princes to the ancient imperial city of Frankfort, and propose a thoroughgoing reform of the Confederation. He drew up a memorandum and showed it to the Prince of Thurn and Taxis, who forwarded it to Francis Joseph. It was to assist in carrying out his own suggestion that Froebel was called to the Ballhausplatz to fill a position of confidence.

The idea of appearing as Cæsar Augustus before an assemblage of German kings and princes appealed to the Emperor. Now that Habsburg power in Italy was broken, supremacy in Germany acquired a new significance in his mind; he felt, and on various occasions emphasized, that he was a German ruler first and last; Biegeleben's eloquence awakened in him a sense of mission: to bring, with a firm hand, order into the chaos of the Confederation; to stand where his grandfather Francis stood, last Roman Emperor of the German nation; to recover, ultimately, the lost heritage of twenty Habsburg generations; to turn Germany once more into a Catholic great power. Froebel's proposal reached him at the psychological moment; moreover, it reached him through the best sponsor possible. The Prince of Thurn and Taxis was his brother-in-law, husband of one of the Empress's sisters. He was the wealthiest of German feudal lords. His court at Ratisbon kept alive the traditions of pre-revolutionary Germany when people feared God, paid taxes, and obeyed their masters without asking questions. The Prince was an ambitious man. He was the head of the ultramontane Catholic, anti-Prussian party. He planned far ahead. Supposing Prussia and Austria got embroiled in a war. Catholic

South Germany, and the more important Middle German sovereigns, would, in the nature of things, support Austria. Prussia would be crushed. Why not, he asked himself and his wide circle of friends, put an end once for all to Hohenzollern arrogance by carving up the Prussian state? Its Western half, the Rhine provinces, was Catholic, and anti-Prussian at heart. The Prince's idea was to set up a great Catholic Western German kingdom with himself as king, a foil forever to Prussian ambition and greed. He had a map of Germany engraved, with the boundaries of the new Kingdom of Westphalia clearly marked, and circulated it among his adherents. He then approached the Emperor of the French. For some time Napoleon had been watching anxiously developments at Berlin, in Germany generally. The idea of the Prince of Thurn and Taxis was in direct line with the German policy of his uncle, of all the great French statesmen since Richelieu: to keep Germany weak by keeping her divided. The Prince of Thurn and Taxis now offered him territorial concessions for his endorsement of an ancient French scheme. Why not? Napoleon gave his blessing. The Taxis millions were mobilized. At Vienna the Hessian trio were working overtime. The Congress of German princes at Frankfort was to be the beginning of greater things.

The Prince of Thurn and Taxis despatched his factotum, the Baron Dörnberg, to Vienna, to work out the plan of the Congress with the Emperor. In the briefest time Dörnberg reported success. He became *persona gratissima* with Francis Joseph. He saw the Emperor every day. Biegeleben backed him, discreetly but effectively; behind Biegeleben were arrayed still greater powers: the Jesuits, the ultramontane bishops, with Cardinal Rauscher at their head. Froebel—a mere journalist, and a

Lutheran at that—was kept in the background. Dörnberg had a great advantage, not only over him, but even over Biegeleben—not to mention the Foreign Minister Rechberg, who was not admitted to the holy of holies at all. Dörnberg was not only a foreigner—Biegeleben and Rechberg were foreigners, too; but he was also a stranger. Francis Joseph accorded much more consideration to him than to the men on his own payroll. Dörnberg was a prepossessing sort of gentleman, intensely conscious of his accomplishments and his importance. While Biegeleben contented himself with calling the Frankfort scheme "our" scheme, Dörnberg constantly spoke of Froebel's memorandum as "my" memorandum—to Froebel. Froebel did not care. He knew that the Prince of Thurn and Taxis regarded him as a mere tool. *He* regarded the Prince as his. He was interested in realizing an idea, not in acquiring personal prestige.

Details of state business had always been Francis Joseph's *grande passion.* Into the details of the Frankfort plan he threw himself with even more than his usual zest. A number of German sovereigns were approached. The responses were most gratifying. Not the least part of Francis Joseph's fun consisted in keeping the whole matter secret both from Schmerling and Rechberg. It was *his* business, none of theirs. As a matter of fact Schmerling knew everything through Froebel; but that was in the strictest confidence; officially the omnipotent Minister of State had to pretend ignorance of the most important state transaction of the day. Rechberg, on the other hand, first learned of the plan when all the invitations to the German rulers had been sent. Well, what could he expect? He succeeded a Foreign Minister who learned from the newspapers that his Government had declared war. Rechberg did what Buol had done,

He tendered his resignation. It was not accepted. "I cannot have my ministers give me the sack just because they happen to disagree with one of my measures," said the ruler of constitutional Austria. At the age of fifty-three the Count Rechberg had a Latin lesson. He had to discover that minister was a synonym for servant. His was the pleasure of lending his name and his vitality to a policy which he believed to be entirely wrong. It may have been good discipline for Rechberg's soul; it did not help the policy much. The machinery jerked. There were little deadlocks. Francis Joseph could not understand it. Of course Rechberg was incompetent. Said Francis Joseph to Baron Dörnberg: "There is only one man in the whole Austrian government with whom I can work, and that is Biegeleben." The Emperor had, since Solferino, developed a subconscious desire for having the wrong sort of minister. It was one way of insuring himself against failure.

The ministers fought for the honour of accompanying the Emperor to Frankfort. Not unreasonably Schmerling, father of the *Grossdeutsch* idea, expected to go. Unfortunately he was too popular in Germany. The cause of imperial union under Austrian leadership was too closely linked with his name. Francis Joseph refused to be overshadowed by his own minister. He did not mince his words. He said to Schmerling: "If I take you along what will be *my* rôle?" At last the Emperor's choice fell on Biegeleben and Rechberg. He did not worry about his Minister's feelings. Froebel was despatched to manage the publicity.

On August 16, 1863, amid great pomp, Francis Joseph opened the Congress of Princes in the ancient hall of the Roman Emperors at Frankfort. Everything went off beautifully—down to one detail. The King of Prussia did

not come. Seeing that one of the principal purposes of the meeting was to reach a working basis with Prussia, this was a serious flaw. It meant, moreover, an affront; for Francis Joseph had personally asked King William. The King of Saxony, the Emperor's most devoted friend, now undertook to save the situation and hurried off to the spa of Baden-Baden to fetch the Prussian monarch. It was not easy to refuse an invitation of thirty princes delivered by a King. William wavered. Trembling with suppressed fury, Bismarck entreated him to stay. There was a heated battle; but in the end Bismarck had his way. As he left the King's apartment he relieved his feelings by breaking the doorknob; upon reaching his own room he snatched a vase and smashed it against the wall.

But the King of Prussia did not attend the Congress of Frankfort; and that one fact sealed the fiasco of the whole magnificent venture. Many speeches were made, many assurances of homage and loyalty were laid at Francis Joseph's feet; but no action was taken. The cause of German union did not advance. Simultaneously with the thirty princes, delegations of the diets of various German states had arrived at Frankfort. Here, indeed, were the makings of a great German National Parliament, the nuclei of a Chamber of Princes and a Chamber of Peoples. Unfortunately the princes completely ignored the presence of their peoples' representatives. The opportunity went by.

The princes returned home. They had not accomplished much; still, it had been a splendid assemblage. Francis Joseph basked in the reflection of the past grandeurs it evoked. He was still, like the Roman Emperors of old, *primus inter pares*. His prestige rose. He met the British Queen at Coburg. The good Victoria recom-

mended her "children"—the Princess Royal was the wife of Crown Prince Frederick of Prussia—to his favour. She hoped that Francis Joseph would never encroach on their rights and their status.

But then, the British Queen was such a dear romantic lady—especially when she breathed the air of her beloved Germany. Bismarck judged the outcome of Frankfort in a more realistic spirit. All that the Austrian Government achieved, he said, was that the Emperor was presented with bouquets by a host of blushing white-clad princes.

On his entry into his capital Francis Joseph was cheered by the crowd. The Viennese are a good-natured race; the frost of the early years had thawed long since. True, Frankfort was as good as, or worse than, a lost battle; but the event escaped attention. Just the other day a popular prima donna had boxed her manager's ears in her dressing room. The Viennese newspapers had no space for a mere Congress of German Princes.

CHAPTER XVI

DEFEAT

I

Toward the end of 1863 King Frederick VII of Denmark obliged Bismarck by reopening, through his well-timed death, the question of Slesvig-Holstein. The idea of German national unity, which, greater than himself, this hard-headed Prussian junker now had come to represent, seemed, to speak with Hegel, to trick all men into serving its ends: the Danish Government proclaimed the union of Slesvig with the mother kingdom, thus breaking ancient and renewed pledges of the indivisible autonomy of the twin duchies. At Vienna Rechberg—ascendant again: fiasco of Frankfort providing him with a faint footing of "I told you so"—honestly upheld Berlin's hypocritical stand for the sanctity of contract. By fatuous pride the Danes ruined a good cause. War: Danes fighting with dogged bravery against tenfold odds, selling dearly every inch of ground, retarding the inevitable. Prussian and Austrian armies at last overran peninsular Denmark; British intervention, the Danes' first hope and last, never materialized; peace handed the two duchies to the victors in unequal struggle.

Bismarck scored doubly. He had wished to test his theory that whatever happened the British would not fight. He was right. British crowds cheered Denmark;

British generals lacked regiments; British statesmen looked on as Prussia seized the naval base of Kiel. Then, the Prussian Premier schemed to construct a maze wherefrom the passion-blinkered rulers of Austria would, later on, find no way out but war.

In August, 1864, King William came to Vienna. Around a table in the palace of Schönbrunn four men sat down to straighten out the tangle. Bismarck expressed regret that the division of jurisdiction over the conquered provinces should cause disagreement between the allies. Rechberg—no fool—offered the simplest solution, prescribed by geography: let Prussia take both duchies, but let King William underwrite Austrian possession of Venetia, and cede the Silesian county of Glatz. A wise bargain: trading a liability for two assets. Too wise: Bismarck saw through it. Return Silesian ground? (Stolen ground, coldly said the eyes of Maria Theresa's great-grandson.) Never! Bismarck chose his words well. A war, he explained, was not like a business undertaking where the partners divided the profits; it was like a shooting party where everybody took his own bag home. A language that Francis Joseph, most devoted of huntsmen, could appreciate. Bismarck proposed: The duchies for Prussia, but an alliance against France. A not unattractive idea. Solferino still rankled—very much so. Rechberg, Foreign Minister of Austria, approved. Biegeleben, councillor under the Foreign Minister, disapproved. Said the subordinate to the superior: "We are not going to sign this. For if we do, we shall have no point of friction with Prussia." That was it. Conserving points of friction was essential. Francis Joseph sided with Biegeleben. The agreement was not signed.

Soon afterward Rechberg petered out. He was suc-

ceeded by the Governor of Galicia, Count Mensdorff-Pouilly. A cavalry general who knew not a thing about foreign politics, and admitted it. After the disaster he pleaded that he had accepted the post because he was a soldier, and the Emperor commanded. Such conduct was called, by the traditional code, honourable. Perhaps by the standards of reason, it would have been more honourable for keenly felt unfitness to take the consequences of refusal. His task consisted, principally, in acting as a man of straw. He appended his name to the Treaty of Gastein which assigned Holstein to Austria, Slesvig to Prussia. Provisionally. A fine treaty in the sense of Biegeleben. Also, of Bismarck. A reservoir of *casus belli*, brimming over.

Next came Schmerling's turn. The Minister of State had contrived to acquire an incredible variety and number of enemies. Tripping him up was the one programme upon which all parties, races and denominations of the Empire found co-operation possible. To the German liberals, his original friends, he was too autocratic; to the ultramontanes, too liberal; to the Slavs, too German; to the Hungarians, too Austrian. He bitterly antagonized the powerful Prince of Thurn and Taxis. Also, Mrs. Bury. A mysterious English lady who in this period exercised much influence in the background of Austrian politics, and brought the points of view of the princely court of Taxis, the Hungarian opposition, Austrian industrialists, and international financiers at Brussels, Paris and London down to the common denominator of her own private purposes.

Many were Schmerling's shortcomings; the most fatal, his complete ignorance of psychology. He was a strategist who based his plans on the theory that the enemy had none. Too unimaginative to grasp other

people's schemes, he posed as superior to scheming; purblind to intrigue, he prided himself on his straightforwardness. He knew, though, that he was incapable of managing men; but cancelled all benefit of this wisdom by a qualifying folly: he honestly believed that he could manage Francis Joseph. Of all men, Francis Joseph. He spoke of "educating" him. He fell with a thud.

II

After the German Centralist Bach, the Slav Federalist Goluchowski; after the Slav Federalist Goluchowski the German Centralist Schmerling; after the German Centralist Schmerling the Slav Federalist Belcredi. Francis Joseph's inconsistency worked with the consistent regularity of a clock. Once more he tried "the other thing"; once more he punished Centralism. Also, he punished the German idea by punishing the Germans of Austria. Francis Joseph (a German, and a German prince, first and last, as he had repeatedly declared) lived down the Frankfort disappointment by choosing a dyed-in-the-wool Czech junker, Count Richard Belcredi, for his new Minister of State. Not Premier: bestowal of the lower title conveyed a mental reservation. With fine tact, Belcredi articulated the Imperial motive: "If Schmerling governed Austria for five years without the Slavs, I shall show these Germans that I can govern just as long without them."

He began by suspending Schmerling's constitution, offensive both to Slavs and Hungarians. Note the elegant *nuance:* suspended it. Schwarzenberg had revoked; but Belcredi merely suspended. No less elegant was his argument. The Patent of February, he stated, had not worked in Hungary; *ergo*, it was withdrawn from

Austria as well. The net result—no constitution at all—looked remarkably like revocation.

The Hungarian affairs engaged Francis Joseph's attention in growing measure. He had been all but dislodged from Italy; Germany—at Frankfort—rejected his overtures; in Austria, deadlock was becoming standardized; he was awaking to the potentialities of a reconciliation with Hungary, largest, most populous, most fertile of his realms. The country's mood was anything but satisfactory; but in one quarter the monarch's intentions were met half way. In Francis Deák the Hungarian nation possessed a statesman who combined clear thinking, poise in judgment, and infinite patience, with true nobility of character. An old-fashioned country squire of small means, Deák had been one of the leaders of the moderates in 1848; he was now the foremost among the spokesmen of his people, with unbounded authority like that of an Old Testament patriarch. In an article published in a Budapest journal at Easter, 1865, he presented the demands of Hungary, proposing the Pragmatic Sanction of 1723, the law fixing the order of succession and pronouncing the union of Austria and Hungary "indivisible and inseparable," as the common ground upon which the Crown and nation could meet. This was the voice of Deák's usual moderation; what caused a sensation was the glowing tribute he paid to Francis Joseph's "wisdom and sense of justice."

It is stated that the Emperor was "joyously surprised" over the Hungarian statesman's "spontaneous" demonstration of good will. His surprise could have been hardly more poignant than Deák's spontaneity was spontaneous; for publication of the article had been preceded by lengthy negotiations between its author and the monarch's emissary Baron Augusz. That "frame-

up," however, remained a state secret carefully kept over half a century; and the "Easter Article" had the effect of a beneficent bombshell. The ice was broken. A few months later Francis Joseph came to Budapest to open the session of the Diet, convoked once more. Under the Hungarian law he was no king *de jure*, not having been crowned with the crown of St. Stephen; but the charm of his *de facto* kingship, supported by an address of well-planned generosity, did not fail of its effect. There was no more mention of the "forfeit" of the 1848 constitution; the sovereign merely pointed to the need of its revision in conformity with the Pragmatic Sanction. Quick response to a friendly word, easy forgetfulness of past wrongs, were always important features of the national self-portrait which every Hungarian breast proudly harboured. The timely reincorporation of Transylvania to the mother kingdom had made an excellent impression. The *rapprochement* between the House of Habsburg and the Hungarians had begun.

III

They called Count Belcredi "Sistierungsminister," or Minister of Suspension; his cabinet, the Three Counts' Government; the other two eponymous noblemen being the Minister of Finances Count Larisch, and the Foreign Minister Count Mensdorff-Pouilly. Special piquancy was lent to the label by the fact that the most important member of the Three Counts' Government was the fourth Count—the Minister without Portfolio, Count Maurice Esterházy. He was scion of the premier noble house of Hungary which since the seventeenth century by unswerving loyalty to the Emperor amassed one of the largest fortunes in Europe. A pupil of the Jesuits, he seemed to be filled completely by two emotions: hatred

of Protestant Prussia, and zeal for the advancement of Catholic interest. Of small and slight stature, he diffused that uncanny *aura* usually associated with a secret deformity; it was reinforced by the strange, almost unnatural, fire of his dark eyes, like beacons of a remote, ultra-real world within. His queerness was generally noted. As Ambassador to Rome he neglected, despite repeated queries, to send a single dispatch to the Foreign Office in five months, and had to be recalled. Then for weeks on end he locked himself up in a dark room and refused to see any one. These were, in a great lord, excusable vagaries; society began to frown when he took to beating his wife; but he had to set his own castle on fire before he was locked up in a lunatic asylum. Like most acts of state in Austria, his internment came too late; for by then "mysterious Maurice," as he was known in intimate circles, had worked his full measure of public disaster.

In domestic politics he was an ardent champion of pre-March autocracy, in diplomacy, heir to Metternich's conceit and tortuous methods, but not his caution. With Biegeleben he was on most cordial terms; upon the Foreign Minister Count Mensdorff he exercised an almost weird, a quasi-hypnotic, influence. The key to his omnipotence—for as such his power after Rechberg's fall may be described—was, naturally, and as in the case of Schwarzenberg and Grünne, his hold on the Emperor. He had unrestrained access to the Presence; he annexed the all-important function of selecting and editing ambassadorial reports for the monarch's use; he moved about the personnel of the Austrian government like chessmen.

He was, for one thing, the clearest-cut representative of that ultramontanism which had reached its fulfilment

with the Concordat of 1855. Federalism and centralism, feudal and bourgeois control, civil and military administration, Slav and German course—these were but passing political fashions to suit the Emperor's fancy; he changed his systems as ordinary mortals change shirts; but immovable like the rock of ages stood the Concordat. To Francis Joseph the test of a minister's orthodoxy was his attitude to the pact with the Pope; it was the one standard by which such disparate personalities as Bach and Goluchowski were commensurable. Schmerling at the height of his power had an object-lesson of this. He proposed some minor measure regulating two of the Jesuit colleges, in agreement with the President of the Council, the Archduke Rainer. In two lines the ruler commanded his "omnipotent" minister to leave the Jesuits well enough alone. The man who wished to educate Francis Joseph was treated by him like an importune schoolboy.

Possibly the power of "mysterious Maurice" rooted in his talent to devise a foreign policy which, while rigidly upholding Francis Joseph's notions of Imperial dignity, accentuated its oneness with the interests of the Holy See. He was as insolent toward Prussia which questioned the former, as toward the Italian kingdom which encroached upon the latter. Through Esterházy Francis Joseph, who would never admit to himself indulgence in such a pastime, dreamed of Revenge. Revenge for Solferino and Villafranca. Suppose—thus Esterházy argued—Napoleon died: Austria would swoop down on protectorless Italy, reconquer Lombardy, reinstate the Princes in Tuscany, Modena, Parma, restore the Pope's domains to the pre-1860 status quo. . . .

In 1865 the Italian Government sent General La Marmora to Vienna with an offer to purchase Venetia

for 4,000,000 lire. The idea was not new; already in 1860 the Austrian minister of finances, Plener, had advocated the sale as a measure of fiscal and military relief. Every consideration of sound statesmanship now commanded acceptance of the offer. It was perfectly clear that Austria could not, unless a miracle changed the European constellation, hold Venetia in the long run. War with Prussia was a question of time only; war with Prussia meant war with Italy as well while Venetia remained Austrian; and Austria could not face a war on two fronts. Thus the occupation of Venetia involved not only an intolerable strain for the present, but a positive danger for the future. The Italian Government offered badly needed cash for what to the Empire was not an asset, but a twofold liability. The offer was refused. Esterházy's overt argument stated that it was below the Emperor's dignity to sell a province for money. But that was not the real motive. With Venetia gone, Esterházy impressed upon the Emperor, Austria would lose its last foothold in Italy and thus surrender the defence of the Pope's temporal power. That was decisive.

Biegeleben, that Jesuit in a frock coat, ably seconded. He and Esterházy jealously guarded all approaches to the Emperor's mind; their ally, the Adjutant-General Count Crenneville, who sat in the Emperor's anteroom, assisted by guarding the approach to his body. Their union was forged in the furnace of white-hot hatred of Prussia. Schwarzenberg's purpose, *Avilir puis demolir*, sprang to new life in the bond; but not Schwarzenberg's ability.

Every aspect of the situation, domestic and international, prescribed peace: they worked for war. The Austrian provinces in apathetic muddle; in Hungary revolu-

tionary undercurrents (Kossuth's emissaries at work again, or still: now Prussia, not Piedmont, the hope); the Treasury a chronic void; the army backward in organization and armament. Surely an Empire labouring under such difficulties could not wage war? On the contrary. To Esterházy, Biegeleben, Crenneville, war seemed the way out.

Prussia proposed to buy the Elbe duchies. The Vienna Government refused to sell. A statesmanship of vision would have made terms with both enemies; a statesmanship of bare common sense would have made terms with either; the statesmanship of Esterházy provoked both. He imagined—for no particular reason, beyond Napoleon's well-known foible for the Pope's temporal power, in which he recognized a mystic link—that France would enforce Italian neutrality. On the contrary. Napoleon mediated the alliance of Italy and Prussia—a work of supererogation: so obviously was this alliance thrust on Turin and Berlin by Vienna. But Napoleon could not bear the thought of being "left out"; so he counselled the self-evident, and hoped for the Rhineland as a commission for his trouble.

Prussia proposed a compromise: division of leadership, Austria to assume command in Southern Germany, Prussia, in the North; a joint campaign against France, weakened by the Mexican adventure; Austria to obtain Strassburg. The proposal was brought to Francis Joseph by Baron Gablenz. The Emperor referred it to the Cabinet. The Cabinet discussed it. Said the Minister of War, Franck: "Too late. If we stop arming now all Europe will say we are frightened. After the first battle —perhaps." Said the Minister of Finance, Larisch: "War, by all means. Our situation is desperate. If we win we'll pocket a big indemnity. If we lose we may go

into bankruptcy honourably." The Foreign Minister Mensdorff alone voted for peace. He spoke of the Prussian needle-gun. He spoke of Austrian unpreparedness. "One does not start a war with a reserve of five battalions." He was overruled. What could he do? When all was over he justified himself with a memoir. "Never," he wrote, "have serious men handled a question of such scope with such levity."

IV

The Great Powers stepped in. Queen Victoria's heart throbbed for Legitimacy—thus, for Austria. True, dear Albert had favoured a Prussian-led Germany; but dear Albert, still a shining ideal, was a live political factor no more. Czar Alexander had not forgotten the Crimea—Prussian loyalty, Austrian treason. He wished to save Prussia from defeat. Napoleon could not bear the thought of being "left out." He joined the demarche. In the open. (Behind the scenes he egged Prussia on: for France it was a good thing if the two German Great Powers proposed to devour each other.) They jointly proposed a conference. Prussia and Italy accepted. Here, if ever, was Austria's chance. "Time gained, everything gained," old Metternich, who knew his Austria, used to say. Excellent motto for an Empire which had battalions without shoes and generals without battalions. Esterházy was of sterner stuff. A grim idealist: shoes and battalions worried him not. He dictated: Austria would sit down to conference only if all discussion of territorial changes were excluded. (A sensible condition: dinner, but only if food is excluded.) There was no conference.

Esterházy's first great success. The second followed. On June 12, 1866, he concluded a secret agreement with

Napoleon's ambassador the Duke of Gramont. He pledged to cede Venetia (which he would not sell a year ago) to Italy even if Austria won the war in Germany. In return the Emperor of the French guaranteed to preserve the Papal State; even, if all went well, to restore some of the lost Papal provinces.

Further: If Austria won the war in Germany she could take Silesia—but in that event Napoleon would take the Rhineland. (Napoleon was determined to take the Rhineland whatever happened: he believed in re-insurance.)

"The most incredible treaty in history": thus an Austrian Foreign Minister described Esterházy's feat. From the Concordat of 1855 to this secret convention of 1866: Francis Joseph's cycle was complete. The Concordat, by ceding part of the Imperial power to the Pope, sacrificed leadership in Germany through alienating all Protestants and liberals. The Convention sacrificed Austria's last province in Italy for the preservation of the Pope's temporal power. In the solitude of his dark chamber Esterházy may well have celebrated himself. His wife was as yet unbeaten, his château unignited; but his political mission was fulfilled.

On the day before the Austrian Government summoned the estates of Holstein. This was a breach of treaty; the *casus belli* for which Bismarck had schemed through ten years. And it was Austria at that, not Prussia, which ordered mobilization first. The dice which the Austrian Government loaded in its opponent's favour were cast. With a bleeding heart, after eight sleepless nights, King William resorted to the decision of arms. Bismarck was right when he warned him that hostility to Prussia had become the supreme, if not the exclusive, purpose of the Austrian State.

V

The Archduke Albrecht was the son of Archduke Charles, conqueror of the great Napoleon at Aspern. He was the Emperor's second cousin. A capable military administrator, a conscientious and scientifically trained soldier—hardly a strategic genius. He was eager to prove himself one, though, and duplicate his father's glory. Of the two fronts, North and South, he chose South. An easy alternative. Beating the Italians was one of the traditions of the Austrian army—Solferino, Magenta had been won by the French.

As a matter of fact the army in Italy already had a commander. General Louis Benedek was a brave and honourable soldier. He had won his spurs on the battlefields of Italy. In the war of '48, at Mortara, he charged at the head of a battalion a village held by a Sardinian brigade, and captured the whole outfit—2000 men, five times the number of his own. At Solferino, where the battle was lost chiefly through the half-hearted fighting of Clam-Gallas's Hungarian regiments in the centre, Benedek, who commanded the right wing, addressed his troops, sabre in hand: "Magyars, onward! I am a Magyar myself, you won't leave your countryman in the lurch?" They went with him through the gates of hell. He was ignorant of military science, inarticulate at the council table, mediocre as an organizer; but he was a gallant leader of men, resolute, absolutely fearless, beloved by the common soldier for his courage, his simple straightforward, somewhat gruff manners, his unassuming personality, his coarse jokes. The whole army, including himself, took it for granted that he would be appointed to the Italian command. His consternation was boundless when the Emperor had him summoned

and ordered him to proceed to Olmütz and assume command on the Northern front.

In his blunt manner he told the sovereign that he could not accept the appointment. In Italy, he said, he knew every tree; in Bohemia he did not even know which way the Elbe flowed. If left to command in Italy he would vouch for the safety of Venice. In the North he would vouch for nothing. He could play the violin, but that did not mean that he could play the flute too. The Emperor asked him to think it over.

Benedek could not see that there was anything to think over. That morning the Archduke Albrecht had called on him at his lodgings. They were old friends; at Mortara, in the heat of battle, they had exchanged sabres—an ancient practice of chivalry; and it was the pride of Benedek's life that on that occasion he received the sword which once belonged to the victor of Aspern. In earnest, almost passionate, words the Archduke urged him to accept the Northern command—accept it as a sacrifice for the dynasty; for it would be disastrous if the Prussians defeated a member of the House of Habsburg. Surely he would not shrink from the difficulty of the task when the fate of the Imperial House was at stake?

Benedek was touched; but unmoved. He faced the Emperor firmly. Just because he had the dynasty's and the empire's highest interests at heart would he stick to his guns and fight in Italy, where he was sure to win, not in Bohemia, where he felt he would make an ass of himself. He made ready to return to Verona on the morrow. In the dead of the night he was sent for by the Adjutant-General, who announced that the Emperor had made up his mind and appointed him to commander-in-chief of the Northern army. Public opinion clamoured for the

The Archduke Albrecht of Austria

The Imperial Family of Austria

Left to right
Standing: Emperor Francis Joseph, Archduke Max, Archduchess Charlotte, Archduke Louis Victor, Archduke Charles Louis

Sitting: Empress Elizabeth with Crown Prince Rudolph and Archduchess Gisela, Archduchess Sophie, Archduke Francis Charles

Courtesy of Amalthea-Verlag, Vienna-Zürich

hero of Solferino. Moreover, if Albrecht was defeated in Bohemia there would be nothing to do for the Emperor but abdicate.

"After that appeal," Benedek later wrote to a friend, "I should have been a bad sort of fellow had I still refused." He accepted, but on two conditions. First, absolute freedom of action and no interference from Vienna; second, that in case of a disaster he would be accountable to no one but the Emperor himself.

He went to Olmütz instead of Verona. But he was a changed man. His self-confidence—greatest asset of a man of his type—was gone. Evil forebodings thronged his mind. He groped his way hesitatingly, unconsciously longing for the defeat which would justify his first instinct. He had—an incongruous trait—profound respect for the book-learning he did not possess himself. Under more congenial circumstances this humility might have saved him; as things were, with his self-assurance shattered, it decayed into pitiful dependence on the theorists: his chief of staff Henikstein and the director of operations, Krismanić—the latter arrogant, dogmatic, cocksure, the former, more intelligent, but an ingrained pessimist whose gloomy forecasts and eternal doubts swelled Benedek's spleen.

The generalissimo's hesitancy displeased the Emperor who expected dashing action, and on June 11—the fateful day of the final breach—sent his aide-de-camp Lieutenant-Colonel Beck to headquarters and ordered Benedek to march on Berlin.

VI

There was no march on Berlin. Austria was defeated almost before a shot had been fired. The armies of the German Confederation, which on paper was at war with

Prussia, did not enter the fight: the sovereigns preferred watchful waiting, with the exception of the King of Hanover, whose forces were surrounded and captured after a few days, and the King of Saxony, who held out loyally unto the end.

That end drew on like an avalanche. From three sides the Prussians invaded Bohemia. The lightning speed of their mobilization and concentration overwhelmed the halting Austrian leadership; the needle-gun mowed down resistance. Benedek retreated almost before he knew it, and took up a strong position at Königgrätz. On July 1 he telegraphed to the Emperor: "I entreat your Majesty to conclude peace. The army faces inevitable disaster." In two hours the Emperor's reply arrived. Military honour forbade a withdrawal.

On July 3, 1866, Benedek's prophecy, and the fate of Austrian hegemony in Germany, were fulfilled. All the heroism of the Austrian troops and their Saxon allies availed nothing against the immense superiority of Prussian strategy and armament. Austrian tactics, with rules distilled from experience left far behind by the progress of military science abroad, were based on the principle of massed bayonet attack: a romantic futility, with its invocation of the selfsame military honour which the Emperor prized so highly, against the devastating rapid-fire technique of the Prussians. A romantic futility costing thousands of lives. Toward evening the battlefield was a shambles, and the Austrian army in full flight.

Sultry evening of midsummer. Viennese crowds at feast in the beer-gardens of the Prater. Chinese lanterns and Swiss cheese. Fried chicken by the trayload, and a wistful star balanced on edge of massive dark foliage against a pale-green sky. Orchestras (mostly brass)

gaily unmindful of each other's nearness, releasing tidal waves of Lanner and Strauss over couples eager to plunge into the whirlpools of waltz. Here amidst a group of tables, there in a bower discreetly receding from light, the bards of the Vienna faubourgs, wrapped in thin harmonies of lute and zither, sing of love and wine and springtime, of the good old days and the vanities of the passing show —languishing songs and mocking, cynical, delicious. More trayloads of fried chicken, jugs of new wine. Suddenly, from nowhere, an icy gust: The army beaten—the Prussians marching on Vienna! Well! It was over in a moment. War. Defeat. What matter? "*Die Welt ist ein Komödienhaus.*" Königgrätz—far away—in Bohemia—or the North Pole. "*Ach, Herr Jegerle!*" Let the Government worry, that's what it was for. "*Der Weaner geht net unter.*" Waiter, beer! Chinese lanterns. Swiss cheese. Sentimental shreds of zither.

Two o'clock in the morning. Imperial city sleeping the deep sleep of righteous digestion. The King of Saxony—his army ground to dust, but he does not know yet—to arrive at the Northern Terminus. Flags and flowers. Officials in full gala. Generals. But all talk muffled: all on tiptoe: as if somebody was dead. Or something: six centuries of Habsburg primacy in Germany. Last hope of Holy Roman Empire of German Nation. Gone. Shroud of silence suddenly rent by shrill blasphemy of electric bell signalling train. *Sakrament!* can't you shut it up? Solemn puffing of engine afar, nearer. Punctually, on the second, Francis Joseph dashing in to receive august guest. His steps elastic: those famous elastic steps. Spurs and sabre doing their clanking business as usual. Merry clank-clank of spurs, smart trap-trap of elastic steps. But his face was whiter than his white tunic.

VII

Mr. Lumley, Her Britannic Majesty's Minister to Dresden, and Mr. Morier, Secretary to Her Britannic Majesty's Embassy to Vienna, met in the street Count Vitzthum, the Saxon diplomat. The Englishmen were amazed over the apathy with which the people of Austria bore the news of disaster. They would expect a rising in Bohemia—gamekeepers on big estates passing out arms and ammunition to tenants, organizing guerrillas—franc-tireurs worrying the advancing Prussians' rear. and all that. In the stead of which, everything quiet.

Count Vitzthum (he had been attached to the Saxon legation to Vienna in the good old pre-March days) smiled. He knew his Austria. These Englishmen were thinking of every country in terms of England. They spoke of Bohemian yokels as were they yeomen of Sussex and Kent. Of course, if the French landed at Folkestone!! —Politely, he set them right.

"The Prince Metternich," he said, "did not educate the subjects of this Empire to think and act for themselves."

VIII

Along the roads of Bohemia the Prussians marched on Vienna to gay stirring tunes of their fifes and drums. The Viennese ate their workday boiled beef (fried chicken for feasts) and drank their beer. The official reports conveyed full details of an appalling catastrophe. Bowed with grief, Francis Joseph drove out from the Hofburg to Schönbrunn. Along the Mariahilferstrasse the Viennese assembled and cheered the Emperor Maximilian. (Brother Max was in Mexico, having his own troubles; but in an emergency—say a sudden abdication of the

sovereign—he could be reached by cable. Francis Joseph did not like those cheers.) The Government issued a proclamation. The capital in danger—volunteers, two hundred thousand of them, needed to defend its gates. Huge crowds of Viennese gathered in front of recruiting stations, and watched. In three days three thousand volunteers volunteered. Fully one and one-half per cent. Along the roads of Bohemia the Prussians were marching on Vienna to gay stirring tunes of their fifes and drums.

IX

In the South the Archduke Albrecht (General John, best strategist of the army, his chief of staff) beat the Italians terribly at Custoza, whereupon the Austrian Government, in fulfilment of obligations previously contracted, handed Venetia to the King of Italy. (It had been below the Austrian Government's dignity to sell it for cash a year ago.) When the old Emperor Ferdinand, dozing away his imbecile days in Hradschin Castle at Prague, heard the news, he muttered, meekly: "Is that what ye made me abdicate for? I could have managed losing provinces myself." But then, he was feeble of mind, and did not know what he was saying.

Nor was Custoza the only Austrian victory in the war. In the waters off Lissa Island Admiral Tegethoff attacked the Italian fleet, thrice the size of his own, sent part of it to the bottom, and chased the rest to the winds. Since the days of Salamis naval history records no finer feat than Tegethoff's ramming and sinking, with his ancient wooden ship the *Ferdinand Max*, the proud ironclad *Rè d'Italia*. Unfortunately in his next order of the day he was indiscreet enough to attribute all credit to his men whose bravery conquered in spite of "scanty

preparations begun too late." An unspeakable affront to the heroes manning the desks in the Navy Office at Vienna. It met with swift retribution. Tegethoff gave a banquet for his officers on board the *Kaiser* to celebrate the victory. A few baskets of champagne, fully deserved, were consumed. Thereupon the accountants of the Navy Office dishonoured his vouchers and deducted the cost of the feast from his pay. He was removed from command and given a prolonged leave of absence. The Archduke Leopold, General of Cavalry, was appointed Inspector of the Fleet.

X

Benedek fared worse. He had begged the Emperor not to be charged with a task which he felt was beyond his powers; he had accepted it only when the monarch appealed to his generosity to sacrifice himself for the weal of the dynasty. He now was suspended. He had received the Emperor's pledge that he would be accountable to no one save the Emperor himself. He now was summoned before a commission of inquiry. He declined to answer questions. It was hinted to him that he might save his face by incriminating his inferiors. He refused to incriminate them. The commission ordered his trial by court-martial. Then the Emperor squashed the proceedings.

Benedek, his spirit broken, had only one desire left: an audience with his imperial master to justify his conduct. It was denied. But soon he had an unexpected caller. The Archduke Albrecht again (who had won *his* victory). He brought a statement and asked Benedek to sign it. That never, under any circumstances, would he utter a word in self-defence. Benedek signed it.

A few days later an article was published in the offi-

cial Vienna *Gazette* fixing all responsibility for the Königgrätz disaster on Benedek.

> "However," the article continued, "the statutes provide no penalty for the lack of superior intellectual gifts. The loss of his sovereign's confidence, the ruin of his military reputation before contemporaries and posterity, the realization of the unspeakable misfortune which his leadership has called down upon the army and the Empire, cannot but inflict upon an honourable and high-minded man like Benedek a punishment infinitely harder than any that a court-martial might have imposed."

Benedek had given his word of honour that he would not defend himself. He kept it.

He retired to the pleasant city of Graz, whose fine Alpine air, lovely parks, and low rentals ever attracted pensioned generals. There he lived quietly with a devoted wife, seeing very few people, respected by all. Passers-by who recognized the slim silent officer with the drooping moustache and stooping walk lifted their hats; he returned the salute, but spoke to no one except little children in the public gardens. Once the Crown Prince Rudolf travelled down from Vienna to see him. (His father the Emperor had sent him. An act of generosity.) Benedek begged to be excused: an interview could only tear open old wounds, and to no purpose.

Thus passed fifteen years. Then one day he died. His will contained three instructions. First, he asked to be buried not in uniform but in civilian clothes. Second, that the sword of the victor of Aspern should be returned to the Archduke Albrecht. Third, that all his papers should be burned.

That was all.

XI

Having achieved his purpose Bismarck now practised moderation. The militarists clamoured for breaking Austria's back. Bismarck looked further ahead; not, indeed, to the day after to-morrow, but at least to the morrow. It was undesirable, he argued, to punish Austria more than strictly necessary; it would be inexpedient to render her either implacable or impotent. Besides, he was in a hurry to conclude peace before the Great Powers (who made a mien to) had had a chance to intervene.

The Treaty of Prague excluded Austria from the German Bund, and confirmed Prussia's primacy. The House of Habsburg therewith forswore its claim to the heritage of Charlemagne, and ceased to be, not only the first among German dynasties, but a German dynasty at all.

XII

In the course of the evacuation of Venetia the Austrians blew up their great powder magazine in the fortress of Rovigo. For many hundred miles, all over Northern Italy and across the Swiss frontier, the terrific blast could be heard: grandiose death-knell of fifteen hundred years' Teutonic dream of the Southern Empire, the dream that drove the men of the North ever since the first Goths, approaching Athens in their ships, beheld the blinding white splendour of the Acropolis against a sapphire sky, and, not believing their eyes, believed they saw a vision from beyond the border of things.

XIII

The counter-revolution lifted Francis Joseph upon the throne because his hands were free from the pledges which

The Battle of Custoza, June 24, 1866

Painting by l'Allemand

The Emperor Francis Joseph with the Archdukes and the General Officers of the Austro-Hungarian Army

The Emperor is in the centre; behind him, to the left and in front of the others, is the Field-Marshal Archduke Albrecht, victor of the Italian war of 1866. Every head on this monumental canvas by the Polish painter Kobierski is a recognizable portrait; there are two hundred thirteen in all.

had bound his uncle Ferdinand. Presently he tied them by the March Constitution of '49, breaking his trust with his sponsor Windischgraetz. Then he rescinded the Constitution, and broke his trust with his peoples.

He invoked the principle of Legitimacy, foundation of Empires, when he appealed to the Czar Nicholas for aid against the Hungarian rebels. With the Czar's aid he subdued them. When the Czar needed his help he sided with the Czar's enemies. Thus he broke his trust with the principle of Legitimacy, foundation of Empires —also his Empire.

He set up the most personal pattern of autocracy: his will was to be the fountain wherefrom flowed every act of government, large and small; his will the law whereby sundry and all should be judged. He trusted none of his advisers, and played one against the other. The result: they played him against himself, his lust for power against his sense of insecurity; by libelling his fellow each had his own way. The unbelievable meander which was the path of the Austrian Empire was traced by the Emperor's fear of men upon the background of his self-diffidence. Thus he broke his trust with his own System which could be saved, if at all, only by being what it pretended to be, by unflinching self-reliant strength.

He tried to check the movement of history by police regulations. He strove to resist the fulfilment of the national idea by throwing into prison a few men who could no more help being its tools than he could help being its negation. He presumed to call halt, a new Canute in a white tight-waisted uniform, to the great rolling tide of being. The tide rolled on, taking no notice; and at Solferino swept him off his feet. The Idea crushing its negation incarnate.

Solferino should have been his cue. Fate, before it

closed down on him, signalled a road. Now was his chance to cut his losses once for all, to come, "sincerely and without reservations," to terms with his peoples demanding a share in government. He came to terms with them, but not sincerely nor without reservations; he did not stride forward along the appointed path, but wriggled back and forth, looking for an escape sideways, trying desperately to outwit Destiny. He refused to be led. Therefore he was dragged. To Königgrätz.

And then he broke his trust with the general who sacrificed himself for the glory of his house.

Was he aware at all? Did he fathom the inhuman, sub-human depths of his own faithlessness? He was superhuman; he was his own measure; he knew no other. He knew that he was doing his Duty. Unswerving, tireless, from four-thirty in the morning till nine at night, he did his Duty. Was there another man in his Empire who worked so hard as he, lord and master of them all? Was there another who rose so early and kept such hours? There was none.

He throned in unattainable heights. Men spoke to him when he addressed them, their heads bowed in reverence; their words confirmed, when they did not anticipate, his wishes; their gestures reflected his own awe of himself.

He was *divus Cæsar*. Hard, splendid, immovable, like a statue; and as mute. He could not relieve himself by words; the infinite escape of the confessional, in the true, large sense, was denied to him: the price he paid for his kind of greatness. He did not confide in friends; he did not leave a written record of what he thought and felt.

He was alone. He feared men, and clothed his fear into the solitude of majesty.

Seven weeks after the *débâcle* he filled his thirty-sixth year. It was given to him to live another fifty. How that experience, how all experience, translated itself into the language of his soul, the record of a half century's deeds—not words—was to mirror.

Yet one word escaped even his silence.

"I have an unlucky hand," he said after Königgrätz.

He blamed his ill luck.

PART THE THIRD
THE FRUIT

CHAPTER XVII

THE DREAMER

I

His reign started out in pursuit of two aims which, however moulded and coloured by passing time, remained permanently imbedded as the patterns of desirability in his mind and set the main guiding lines of his life. One was the building up of a unified and centralized autocratic State; the other, the preservation of Habsburg primacy in Germany. The Habsburg programme since Ferdinand II. Within two years those two aims seemed secured. The suppression of revolt and the revocation of the March Constitution left him the autocrat of a strongly welded uniform Empire; Schwarzenberg's victory over Prussia at Olmütz placed Austrian leadership in the Germanic Confederation on a firmer footing than ever since the reorganization of the shattered remains of the Holy Roman Empire in 1815.

Within seventeen years all was lost. In the battle of Königgrätz the last faint version of Charlemagne's proud heritage was forfeited. Another year, and the Compromise with Hungary disrupted the unity of the Austrian Empire itself. Indeed, that division along fundamentally unsound and artificial lines actually initiated the process of disintegration which was completed at the end of the Great War.

Numerous, many-layered, and intricately interwoven were the causes which brought about this development. One of them was Francis Joseph's character. Its core was instability. On the moral plane this instability appeared as a lack of loyalty—a tendency toward ingratitude and treachery wholly unconscious. On the intellectual plane it expressed itself as a disability to think out any situation to its last consequences. Both these traits were ultimately but different facets of his boundless all-pervading selfishness which knew no law beyond its own comfort and gratification—a truly sovereign egotism with a variety of masks—sense of duty, tireless industry, Spartan mode of life, majestic aloofness, whatnot—but whose voice repeated inwardly the same refrain—the burden of Francis Joseph's life: "Leave Me alone to rule My world in My way."

Disability to think out any situation to its last consequences was responsible for that strange shift in his mind's accent which made him sacrifice, first, one of his main objectives for the other, and then reverse the process. Those two sacrifices mark like milestones what may be called the creative period of Francis Joseph's life—the epoch when he still endeavoured to reshape the world in his own image and had not yet resigned himself to adapting the image to unyielding reality. At the outset—the end of 1851—stands Schwarzenberg's diplomatic triumph over Prussia. A statesman of the calibre of Richelieu or Bismarck would have utilized this moment when the rival's power and prestige were at their low ebb to settle accounts with him once for all. There was Francis Joseph's chance to restore and entrench Habsburg supremacy in Germany—to take the lead of the liberal *Grossdeutsch* movement, to encircle Prussia in an iron ring of the middle states, and to reknead the soft unresisting mass

of the Confederation into a political entity such as the Holy Roman Empire, lost by his grandfather to Napoleon, had never been.

But that course would have implied a clearly organized polyphonic reasoning, a capacity for reducing the phenomenal, accidental process of happening to its immanent structure, which was altogether foreign to Francis Joseph. Even as a child he exhibited a singularly concretized, outward-turned mentality, a preoccupation with whatever is obvious and hard and tangible, and an insensibility to that subtler and more elusive, but more real reality which can be grasped only by the intuitive mind. Fate willed it that the circumstances of his first and most decisive trial should stress his prevalent tendency and stunt all rudiments of the opposite. He ascended the throne a mere boy, before any system or standard of political thought had had time to form itself in his brain. The crisis which tossed him to the surface could not be met by theories, only by instant action. To the end of his days he bore the stamp of that first panic. From all sides events rushed him; measures had to be taken at once, without reflection, without regard for any but the most immediate result. Fate, too, willed it that the man who guided his hands in those days should be just the person for just that sort of emergency. Schwarzenberg's successes destroyed such faint beginnings of broadly-designed perspectivic thought as may have slumbered in some unexplored nook of his pupil's intellect. Schwarzenberg's teaching culminated in the precept that each difficulty had to be dealt with as it arose, in the quickest and least expensive way. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." The pupil learned the lesson well.

Thus, having punished Prussia for her insolence at

Olmütz, Schwarzenberg, and with him Francis Joseph, did not exploit the victory, but turned presently to another problem, the restoration of autocracy. Next came the revocation of the March Constitution; the German situation shrunk to a side-issue; the decade that followed belonged to Bach's despotic State of centralization and Germanization.

In December, 1851, Francis Joseph had sacrificed hegemony in Germany to autocracy in Austria. In January, 1867, that sacrifice was reversed. The Emperor now made his peace with Hungary. Bought his peace, rather. The price he paid was Imperial unity and absolutistic government. For by the Pact with Hungary the Empire was divided into two parts; and each was to have a constitution. By these concessions—involving a disavowal of his own past—Francis Joseph hoped to obtain Hungarian support for avenging Königgrätz and recovering the lost treasure of German primacy.

II

The man who embodied this hope was the Saxon statesman Friedrich Ferdinand Baron von Beust—a foreigner whom two months after the disaster Francis Joseph invited to be his new Foreign Minister. The invitation announced to the world in general and Prussia in particular that Francis Joseph refused to regard the decision of Königgrätz as final; for Beust was the leader of the militant *Grossdeutsch* party in Germany who had just been removed from the Premiership of Saxony at Bismarck's behest. A lifetime of anti-Prussian intrigue was rewarded by the appointment.

Beust's programme was summed up in one word: revenge. He told the Emperor that it was still possible

to rally all the states of South and Middle Germany and shatter the new Prussian supremacy. For the final settlement, however, a stronger ally was needed, and was available in the person of Napoleon. But Napoleon would not enter any commitment with an Austria rent by domestic difficulties. Consolidation of the Empire was the *conditio sine qua non* of French support; an understanding with Hungary the *conditio sine qua non* of Imperial consolidation.

Francis Joseph was of the same opinion. In January, 1867, Beust and the Hungarian representatives, led by Francis Deák, signed the so-called Compromise which henceforth was to form in effect, if not in name, the basic law of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. It culminated in the division of the Empire into two distinct States, Austria proper, comprising the hereditary provinces which once belonged to the Holy Roman Empire, and Hungary with Croatia.[1] Each of these parts was to have its own constitution, its own government and legislature. Certain matters, however, such as the army and navy, foreign affairs, and the administration of revenues to cover military and diplomatic expenditure, were reserved for a joint executive of three departments: the War Office, Foreign Office, and Joint Finance Ministry. Each legislature was endowed with the power of supplies; but joint appropriations were to be dealt with by com-

[1] According to the Hungarian view this division was merely a *restitutio in integrum*, Hungary being a free and independent kingdom whose ancient statehood had been unlawfully suppressed in 1849. The Austrians, on the other hand, contended that the separate status of Hungary was an innovation, as that realm had, for all intents and purposes, formed part of the Empire since 1526, when the Archduke Ferdinand of Austria succeeded to the crown of Hungary. The unbiased critics will be inclined to regard the Austrian contention as sound, the more so as Hungarian law itself had, before 1848, frequently referred to Hungary as part of the Empire.

mittees, called Delegations, elected every year by the two parliaments.

This was a very cumbersome arrangement, to say the least. It foisted upon the Empire (a term tabooed, by the way, by Hungarian sensibilities which insisted on the wholly artificial expression Austria-Hungary) no less than three Cabinets and as many parliaments. A still graver complication was involved in the Hungarian refusal to regulate commercial relations and customs—obviously matters of joint concern—permanently within the Compromise itself. Instead, the two Governments were to negotiate a separate agreement every ten years.

Moreover, while the Compromise assured equal rights to both contracting parties, it was provided that Austria should contribute to the joint expenditure 70 per cent., and Hungary, 30, in proportion to population. Not a bad bargain this: fifty per cent. of rights, thirty, of liabilities.

Most substantial of the gains scored by the Hungarians, however, was that they were suffered to prescribe the internal organization of Austria itself. Their insistence that Austria, too, should have a constitution was natural and justified; there was good sense in their argument that it would be anomalous, and in the long run impossible, for Francis Joseph to govern Hungary constitutionally and Austria autocratically. But they went still further, and vetoed Belcredi's proposal of a federal system for Austria. Federalism was the *bête noir* of the Magyar oligarchy; they saw only too clearly how the connection with a federalized Austria, governed by its Slav majority, would affect the Slav population of Hungary. The Magyar spokesman endorsed, therefore, the centralistic constitution sponsored by Beust. The Emperor decided in Beust's favour, and dismissed Belcredi, —with tears in his eyes, it was said.

Thus the system of Dualism, whereby the government of the Empire rested—or was supposed to rest—on the hegemony of the German minority in Austria, and that of the Magyar nobility in Hungary, represented the consummation of the Magyar victory over Francis Joseph. Its innermost meaning was a bargain between the Monarch and the Magyar oligarchy which, notwithstanding the democratic reforms of '48, now partly restored, still held Hungary in its iron grip. They needed each other. The Emperor needed the military and financial resources controlled by the Magyar oligarchy; the Magyar nobles could not, in the long run, maintain their privileges in the face of the swelling nationalism of the non-Magyar races without the Emperor's support. For the first time the Magyar dilemma traced itself clearly against the screen of a dark uncertain future: great power or dismemberment!

The Hungarians carried every point save one. They had demanded a separate Hungarian army. The Emperor told them, in effect, that he would see them damned first. There was one subject in regard to which he would stand for no fooling, and that was his control of the army. At last a *quid pro quo* was arranged: the Hungarians agreed that the military prerogatives of the Emperor and the unity of army organization should remain intact; on his part the Emperor dropped his demand for an all-embracing Central executive.

What a price to pay for a mere untested hope! And the pity of it was that he might have had it all so much cheaper had he not procrastinated, had he followed the trend of the inevitable instead of trying to stem it. Before Solferino he might have bought Hungarian acquiescence and loyalty for a narrow measure of home rule.

After Königgrätz nothing less than the partition of the Empire would do.

Francis Joseph was reaping as he had sown. And another harvest was maturing. The Slavs, and more especially the Czechs, were infuriated by a settlement which fastened the rule of the German and Magyar minorities over them. Why, the Czechs asked, should the Magyars obtain a separate state, and why shouldn't we? If we are a conquered race, so are they—their Világos to our White Mountain. They saw in a flash that one inevitable result of the Compromise was the unlimited oppression of the Slavs in Hungary. They swore revenge. When the new Reichsrath convened, in May, 1867, the Czech deputies were conspicuous by their absence. They had gone on a pilgrimage to "little mother" Moscow. Next, their leader Rieger went to Paris to explain that German rule in Austria was a danger to France, and invoked Napoleon's aid against the common enemy.

III

In February the Hungarian constitution was restored. On June 8, 1867, Francis Joseph and Elizabeth were crowned King and Queen of Hungary respectively. Dazzling oriental splendour of nobles—furs, silks, velvets, jewels, aigrets. Enthusiasm of populace. Peal of bells. Wearing the crown of St. Stephen (several sizes too large for anybody) Francis Joseph rode on a white charger up Coronation Hill and, swinging the sword of the realm to North and South, East and West, swore to defend the Hungarian constitution against all comers.

On June 8, 1867, December 2, 1848, was buried as a mistake. The Austrian Empire existed henceforth only as a misnomer. Hungary had a constitution. So had

Austria proper. In his retreat in Hradschin Castle at Prague well might old Emperor Ferdinand mutter the question, "Is *this* what ye have deposed me for? I was quite good at swearing oaths on constitutions myself."

Turning a new leaf. Starting over again.

In Germany, too. To recover lost treasure. Holy Roman Empire of the German nation.

The road to revenge was free.

So Francis Joseph, hard-headed realist, hater of dreams, dreamed.

IV

On September 19, 1867, three foreigners appeared in the anteroom of the Emperor's audience chamber. Two Italians: Father Roccatani and Colonel de la Rosa, and a Spaniard, the Count de Fresno. A secretary, with much apologetic rubbing of hands, whispers that the audience was appointed for two gentlemen only. Colonel de la Rosa protests—he applied in behalf of three. The secretary registers surprise. On the contrary—it was the illustrious Chevalier himself who submitted two names. The illustrious Chevalier tries to drown the secretary's statement in a flood of deprecations. The priest's face is flushing with anger. What? How? He does not understand all this rapid-fire excited French. But he understands enough—somebody, somehow, tried to freeze him out. *Him*, the leader of this venture, possessor of the Secret! He whispers a name into the secretary's ear. Whose name? That of the Archduchess Sophie, the Emperor's mother? Of the Jesuit provincial? The secretary's hand-rubbing becomes ecstatic. Oh, that is all right—will the Reverend Father also be pleased to enter? They file in. The secretary, with a shrug, makes

a mental note: these three damned Welshmen don't seem to love one another more than they can help. And yet they are together engaged in a most momentous errand.

Most momentous, indeed. The Reverend Father Roccatani has a Secret, which he is prepared to reveal, on conditions, to His Majesty, the Emperor. The Secret of turning silver into pure gold.

They met at Paris, these three, a few months before. In the Paris of the World Exposition, of luxury and adventure and exotic perfumes, of the mad rush for gold and pleasure, of fortunes quickly made and quickly lost. The Prussian volleys at Königgrätz have badly riddled Napoleon's escutcheon—but to all outward appearances that prince of adventurers and adventurer among princes is still the arbiter of Europe. Never has Paris appeared more brilliant, more desirable, more replete with unlimited possibilities, than in these days of the Indian summer of Bonapartism: promised land of soldiers of fortune, promoters and plungers of all races and colours, and both sexes.

It's in this whirligig of wild appetites and fantastic intrigues that the Roman archpriest Romualdo Roccatani, the Spanish grandee Don José Maroto Conde de Fresno y Landres, and the Neapolitan chevalier Colonel Don Antonio Jimenez de la Rosa, late of the Imperial Mexican Gendarmerie, have found each other.

The priest: broadly set, prosaic, middle-class. A man who appreciates a good dinner but prefers to eat it alone. But there is something at once wistful and sullen, dreamy and diffident, in his eyes: a philistine with a secret and a grievance. The Count, tall, slender, nonchalant, sardonic: little dark pig-eyes shaded by beetle brows: long thin moustachio forming cross with goatee in approved fashion of Spanish Christian gentleman. A man

of the world, conceited, disillusioned, disdainful. The Colonel, painfully correct and reserved in manner—too reserved for a Neapolitan: something odd about that, as about an effusive Scotchman. Soft and smooth, of silent tread: altogether feline, a man of ulterior motives.

Their very names the quintessence of romance. Names to fire the fancy of a Stevenson or Conrad. When three men bearing these long, sonorous, improbably musical Latin names, met in the Paris of the late Second Empire, something extravagant was bound to happen.

They met, and something humdrum happened: a business contract. Humdrum? A business contract that might be sung. To the tune of "Fifteen men on the dead man's chest."

The Reverend Father Roccatani declares that by his profound chemical studies and prolonged experiments he has discovered a process of turning silver into the purest gold. He further declares that he has no money. The Count and the Colonel, on their part, declare that they will turn over all their available cash, to wit, fifteen hundred francs, to the Reverend Father, and pledge all their credit, connections, and personal collaboration for the purpose of finding a prince or sufficiently wealthy private citizen to finance the exploitation of Father Roccatani's most interesting discovery. The profits will be divided on the basis of four-sixths to Father Roccatani, and one-sixth each to the other two associates.

A prince or a sufficiently wealthy private citizen. Napoleon was living across the street, as it were. He was always hard pressed for gold, but had more than enough silver for the purpose of transmutation. He had imagination; he had the gambling instinct. Too much imagination, too much gambling instinct. The priest's proposal to tackle him was voted down. The Count and

the Colonel knew better than to try to overwhelm a master juggler with their little bag of tricks.

Why not the Baron Rothschild? He, too, could be reached on the spot; and surely he was a "sufficiently wealthy private citizen." Too wealthy. He needed not the assistance of three poor gentlemen with sonorous names if he wished to make gold. A few taps on the keys of a Morse transmitter, and paper, not silver, was turned into gold for him in the bourses of London, Brussels, Frankfort, Vienna.

Somebody suggested Francis Joseph. Who? The Emperor of Austria was not an obvious prospect. Vienna was not an obvious place for the launching of daring schemes. Yet, as the event was to prove, the associates displayed a keen sense of psychology in lighting on the Austrian ruler in their quest for patronage.

Possibly the brilliant notion had occurred to the Chevalier. He may have bethought himself of turning to account his dormant relations with the Habsburg court. Not that he had been deputy commander of the Imperial Mexican Gendarmerie under Maximilian. Bah! Everybody knew that Mexico was the last place in the world that Francis Joseph wished to be reminded of. But fortunately the noble chevalier had, in his multicoloured past, seen service under climes less extreme than the Mexican. Once he held a commission in the royal Neapolitan army, and belonged to the garrison that defended Gaeta against the forces of *Italia unita*. The defence of Gaeta was one of the few bright spots in the legitimist record. When the Piedmontese routed the motley Bourbon army the King and Queen, with a small but picked following, took refuge in the fortress of Gaeta. The King, poor thing, was rather an imbecile; but the Queen—as is the way of queens—was a man. She was a

Bavarian princess, the Empress Elizabeth's sister. A celebrated beauty. Romantic young men all over Europe were in the habit of committing, or at least attempting, suicide with the Queen's picture—in uniform, with drawn sabre, exhorting her soldiers under the heaviest fire—pinned to their breasts. After three months' gallant defence starvation forced surrender. But the name of Gaeta remained one to conjure with in Conservative circles. Don Antonio's Neapolitan record was one of the principal assets of the gold-making concern.

Another was the Carlist record of Don José. The Conde de Fresno y Landres had been an officer in the army of the Legitimist pretender to the throne of Spain. When the Archduke Albrecht told Francis Joseph that Prussia was about to recognize the Spanish Republic, the Emperor exclaimed, "Don't talk to me about it, it's a damned shame!" The alchemists, of course, could not know that. But they knew—all the world did—of Francis Joseph's Carlist sympathies. The name of Don Carlos was another good introduction in Vienna.

It is one of the ironies of history that the Bourbons, who during the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had fought the Habsburgs to the knife, found their last asylum with them in the nineteenth. Austria fairly swarmed with deposed princes of that once great House. At half an hour's ride from Vienna, in the château of Frohsdorf, resided the Countess Molina, widow of the elder Don Carlos. There resided also the Count of Chambord, known in Legitimist circles as King Henry V of France, last of the senior line of Bourbon, a comfortable rotund gentleman who preferred the quiet culinary pleasures of exile to the tempestuous glory of a French sovereign on active duty. The Chevalier de la Rosa and the Count de Fresno could expect a cordial welcome

at Frohsdorf. And a good word from Frohsdorf went a long way at Schönbrunn too.

Nor was Father Roccatani altogether unbefriended. When the associates arrived at Vienna he went straight to the house of the Society of Jesus. In the Vienna of the sixties the Jesuits were powerful and desirable protectors; they could be powerful and extremely undesirable enemies. Father Roccatani knew them. Acting on his favourite business maxim: honesty the best policy, he made a clean breast of his errand. Perhaps he knew them less well than he thought he did; or else the intelligence service of the Vienna police was better—or worse—even than its reputation; for next morning a report lay on the desk of the Chief of Police stating that the Father Roccatani had told the Provincial that he was engaged in "producing a metal more precious than silver."

The associates' next call was at the Imperial villa in Ischl, where the Emperor's mother, the Archduchess Sophie, lived in seclusion. She was an old woman now; her second son's Mexican tragedy a few months ago broke her once bold spirit; still she was a power to be reckoned with. From Ischl they proceeded to Artstetten, the country retreat of the Emperor's brother, Archduke Charles Louis. A line from the Jesuit Provincial opened doors however strictly guarded.

These preliminaries—with repeated visits at Frohsdorf—absorbed a week. The associates employed their time to good purpose. When the Chevalier applied for an audience with His Majesty—for himself and the Count de Fresno—he obtained it without difficulty. Too bad that in the last moment that fathead Roccatani almost spoiled his game by butting in. Still, that could not be helped; and here they were, awaiting the all-highest summons.

At last, the Emperor. Tall, slim, smart as always. Just a few silver threads in his reddish sidewhiskers. He stands in the middle of the room, erect, chin thrust outward and slightly up. In respectful distance, with a deep bow, the Chevalier pronounces—in Italian—a few introductory words, and offers a petition.

Quickly—almost eagerly—the Emperor reaches out for the paper. And now he addresses the Chevalier.

"You hold the rank of Colonel? Where did you see service?"

For months the Chevalier's only purpose in life was to be able to answer just that question.

"At Gaeta, Sire."

Those famous steel-blue eyes sparkle. Gaeta—not exactly a victory, but at least a glorious defeat.

"You belonged to the garrison?"

"I did, Sire."

"You fought bravely down there—very bravely." A word or two, perfunctory, to the Count and the priest. The Emperor clicks his heels—that famous click. The audience is over.

V

The petition, composed and written out in an elegant hand by the Chevalier de la Rosa, was a masterpiece.

He began with the admission that in "this decadent century" distrust and suspicion were natural and justified. Therefore he had to explain, first of all, the motives which caused the three associates to appeal to Francis Joseph in preference to other rulers. The Father Roccatani, the Count de Fresno and the Chevalier de la Rosa were men who refused to bow their heads before the fashionable idol of political *fait accompli*, and declined to make terms with usurpation. They knew of no other Prince whom

they might approach; for that guardian of legitimacy, the double-headed eagle, built his eyrie atop the House of Habsburg. In offering to the Emperor of Austria the most momentous discovery of all ages—the secret process of turning silver into gold—they did not ask for a penny of advance compensation; only for a guaranty of secrecy, and a share of the profits if successful. If this alone did not suffice to prove the good faith of men who have "left their families, crossed vast distances and assumed tremendous expenses without demanding any reward," why, there was nothing more to be said.

To mere flattery Francis Joseph was impervious, for the homage of men was to him a matter of course, like the air he breathed. But this invocation, with the subtle line of thought that it mobilized: champion of legitimacy—only Prince in Europe—head of Western Christianity—successor to Charlemagne—went straight home. He read in it a portent. After the long series of blows—Solferino, Königgrätz, the surrender to Hungary—the sudden appearance of these men who offered to him gold in quantities unlimited, bespoke an intercession of Providence, a hint from Heaven that he may yet recover all that he had lost.

A sense of the miraculous melted down his native distrust. A distrust which in any case warned him against the men, but not against their pretences. Why should Francis Joseph not have believed that it was possible to turn silver into gold? His scientific education, a bare minimum at its highest, had stopped in his eighteenth year; he had not looked at a book since. He had no judgment in such matters. On the other hand, he had a keen sense of dynastic tradition; and an interest in alchemy was part of that tradition. The two Ferdinands of the Thirty Years' War; Francis of Lorraine, Maria

Theresa's enterprising husband; and Francis Joseph's own grandfather the Emperor Francis, they all dabbled in gold-making; but the great Habsburg patron of the mystic art was the philosopher-Emperor Rudolf II, friend and employer of Tycho de Brahe and Kepler, open-handed promoter of science, easy dupe of all sorts of charlatans. His brooding, dreamy nature and the circumstances of his reign alike urged him to join the immemorial search. Under his great-uncle Charles V the vast treasures of newly-discovered America were drained into the vaults of Habsburg. But when after Charles's death the dynasty split into the Spanish and the Austrian branches, the former inherited all the wealth of the new world, and the latter all the petty and big quarrels and wars of the old. Thus Rudolf's pursuit of alchemy was a half-conscious substitute for the gold of the lost Eldorado overseas.

But had not Francis Joseph, too, lost a world—even two worlds? The Holy Roman Empire may have belonged to a world of dreams; the loss of primacy in Germany was principally the loss of a fiction—a moral loss if you will. But the loss of Lombardy and Venetia meant a very material bereavement. It involved the Habsburg patronage of the Pope, the relation to France, the status in the Mediterranean, and thus Austria's general position in the European power system. Moreover, the lost provinces were among the wealthiest in all Europe, and had formed the main reservoir of Imperial revenue.

And now came these three men—three Italians who refused to bow their heads before the idol of the accomplished fact, who would not make their terms with usurpation—and offered him untold riches: Providence's substitute for the taxes of Lombardy and Venetia.

Through these three men Legitimist Italy pledged to its lawful sovereign compensation for that which revolutionary Italy had wrested from him.

So after all he did *not* have an unlucky hand! That is to say: if what the three associates claimed in their petition was true. The alchemists' advent rekindled his dimming hope; and hope, soon ablaze, warmed his faith in the alchemists.

At first it was, "If Father Roccatani really can make gold everything may yet turn out for the best." But he was no dreamer. He was sober; he was matter-of-fact; he was not in the habit of hinging his plans on pivots of "ifs"; he faced life in the indicative mood. "Everything will turn out for the best; I will beat Prussia; *Father Roccatani can make gold.*"

That it was a fantastic idea: to make gold? Why: was *he* fantastic? The idea! He was no fool. He was not Maximilian. Maximilian—*he* had been a fantast. Only a fantastic fool would do what he did—go to Mexico in quest of the Aztecs' treasure—to find death instead. That's what always happened to dreamers. To men with ideas. *He*, Francis Joseph, need not even leave his palace—did not Heaven hint he was born under a lucky star?—hard-headed sober realist—he could wait: the gold of the Aztecs would be brought to him on a salver in the end.

With unerring tact the Chevalier de la Rosa sensed the strange dualism of Francis Joseph's nature. He regarded himself as the rightful heir of Charlemagne, the temporal head of Western Christianity; and he was a philistine. The petition appealed to the Champion of Legitimacy; it also emphasized the simplicity of the gold-making process. Less subtle swindlers might have blundered into dressing a simple trick in gorgeous trappings. De la

Francis Joseph and Elizabeth, Crowned as King and Queen of Hungary, June 8, 1867, in the Coronation Church at Budapest

(Painting by Engerth and Doby)

The Gold Makers. Left to right: Count Fresno y Landres, Father Roccatani, Don Antonio de la Rosa

(From photograph in Austrian State Archives)

Rosa and his associates masked their romantic hoax as a simple commonplace business operation.

"Whatever your decision may be," de la Rosa concluded his plea, "remember, O Sire, that the first Napoleon might have escaped all the grief and torment of his island had he perceived in time that the English would rule the seas by means of the same steamship which he, when it was offered to him, had, on the advice of scientists, rejected."

To remind Francis Joseph, who had missed so many opportunities, of the greatest opportunity missed by Napoleon; and, in the same breath, to arouse his distrust against the experts he was sure to consult, was a masterstroke of genius.

VI

One week after the audience His Majesty was pleased to command the three associates to carry out the experiment, and to assign Professor Schrötter, of the Vienna Polytechnic, to supervise it. A fly, a big fat fly in the ointment of success was this heavy German professor—a famous authority: discoverer of the red phosphorus—but that could not be helped. Ways and means had to be discussed next. The Chevalier drew up alternative proposals. First, to start the process at once with silver worth five million florins which in the course of a year would transform into the "purest gold" worth eighty millions. Half the profits to go to His Majesty, the other half to the associates. This was not a serious suggestion; it was not made to be accepted. That brilliant psychologist Don Antonio knew well enough that Francis Joseph would never agree to such a sweeping scheme. To gamble: perhaps; but conservatively, on the instalment plan. The Chevalier tossed about with millions

only to set off the modesty of his second proposition: a small-scale experiment with, say, seven hundred grams of silver; if this proves successful the Emperor to become sole proprietor of the secret which is to be deposited forthwith, in writing, in his all-highest hands; only then, and not before, will the associates obtain their reward: the forty million florins aforesaid; the sum of five millions in cash, the balance of thirty-five millions in payments spread over a period of ten years.

"Only then, and not before": that meant, it should be noted, five million florins, no contemptible sum, *after* the success of the experiment on a small scale, but *before* the process of large-scale transformation had begun.

The third alternative was the simplest. If His Majesty did not feel inclined to accede to either of the above-outlined suggestions, the associates would be prepared to conduct the experiment unconditionally and entrust their cause to His Majesty's far-famed generosity. They offered to the Emperor "all possible guaranties," though they neglected to name them; on their part they only stipulated one: that of absolute secrecy; for publicity "would cause the value of gold to drop and the value of silver to rise until they both attained the same level, thereby stripping the discovery of all its advantages." So essential, indeed, was secrecy that the associates proposed that His Majesty should make in his all-highest person a parallel experiment *of which Professor Schrötter must know nothing;* the associates to furnish all the requisite materials and implements; the procedure being so simple that His Majesty could dispense with any expert assistance.

The excellent Chevalier, of course, could not know Francis Joseph's methods of government; he could not know that it was the favourite pastime of that monarch

to declare wars and summon international congresses behind the back of his foreign minister; but he felt that Francis Joseph was saturated with distrust; and he was enough of a connoisseur of human nature to be aware that a really distrustful person most distrusts, in his heart of hearts, those who have the best claim on his confidence: his friends and advisers.

It was the third of the three alternative proposals that met with the Emperor's pleasure. The associates were invited to embark upon the small-scale experiment without specified compensation. They complied. On October 17—a month and five days after their arrival in Vienna: they could congratulate themselves on their speed—the work commenced in a laboratory in the Polytechnic building, fitted up for the experiment at the Emperor's command.

Two glass retorts and an iron pot were filled with amalgam; the retorts contained 250 grams of silver each, the pot, 200 grams. On October 30 Father Roccatani, in the presence of Professor Schrötter, began to heat the vessels. They were continuously exposed to a high temperature until March 9, 1868, when Professor Schrötter examined the contents of the iron pot, and was stricken breathless.

He found that

> "a black powder had separated itself from the amalgam which, on closer examination, proved to be pure gold, forming 0.48 per cent. of the mixture. Two other tests from the same pot yielded the same result."

He would not trust his own eyes.

> "What has taken place," he reported to the Emperor, "is so at variance with the up-to-date

> findings of science that scepticism will be allayed only when the whole of the amalgam has transmuted into gold."

Francis Joseph paid no attention to the qualifying clause. He was not interested in the findings of science; he was interested in finding gold. He was convinced. He ordered the experiment to be repeated on a large scale, and offered to set up a laboratory in the Imperial Palace itself. Father Roccatani was convulsed with delight, but submitted that, an it pleased His Majesty, he would prefer to establish his workshop on a desert island of the Adriatic. Schrötter contrived a compromise. The experiments were to be transferred to the Imperial Mint.

The Professor Schrötter, originally skeptical, was now aflame with enthusiasm. What converted him was not so much success itself as the personality of the inventor. He dismisses the possibility that gold might have been smuggled into the pot. "Father Roccatani's character," he remarks, "precludes the very shadow of this suspicion."

His faith may have been stimulated by eagerness to share the credit for an epochal discovery. Also, the Emperor was growing impatient. Impatient Emperors are not usually kept waiting very long.

Perhaps Professor Schrötter was not as exacting in testing Father Roccatani's concoction as he might have been.

He was soon appointed Director of the Imperial Mint.

VII

Faithful to his promise, Father Roccatani in due course revealed his secret procedure to the Emperor.

His confidential memorandum of January 4, 1868, stated that in Platino, Colombia, and Mariposa, California, there exist deposits of white gold, that is to say, gold amalgam, soft grains or needle-shaped crystals, yellowish white in colour, and of a specific weight of 15.47. Roccatani suggests that this gold amalgam was not produced in the usual way by gold uniting with mercury, but by silver transforming into gold through the slow action of mercury.

> "This same process of transmutation may be brought about much more quickly by artificial methods, through giving the amalgam a specific weight 15.47. Thereby a process of nature is imitated. Thereupon the silver amalgam is exposed to a greatly increased temperature. Herewith our Secret is revealed and the Procedure is clearly explained."

Very clearly indeed. It is the age-old recipe of medieval alchemists, substantially simplified in lay language. Obviously Father Roccatani's opinion of Francis Joseph's scientific education was not very high.

The two retorts employed in the experiment cracked after a few weeks' exposure to heat, and were scrapped. Two glass jars containing silver amalgam and treated exactly like the iron pot were then tested. Of gold not a trace.

Professor Schrötter told Roccatani he hoped for the best.

VIII

The priest was sanguine. He saw his dreams coming true, and himself a millionaire. He sounded the Emperor's private cabinet in regard to some advance against

the 5,000,000 florins which, he suggested, was now about due. He nearly dropped dead when an official in polite but firm tones requested him to go to the devil.

What had happened? The Director of the Private Cabinet, State Councillor Braun, had eyed the associates with suspicion from the very beginning. He scented discord in their camp, and was not mistaken. Roccatani was determined to kick the Paris contract overboard; he hated the Chevalier de la Rosa who, he felt, was trying to use him as a catspaw. The priest dropped some outspoken words. Councillor Braun took pains to relay them to the Chevalier. Thereupon the Chevalier—he was growing weary of the whole blessed business—talked.

Roccatani refused to go to the devil. But, after some suasion, he agreed to go abroad. It was arranged that in six months' time, on September 30, 1868, Professor Schrötter should deliver another opinion. Mutual secrecy was pledged.

Cash? Oh, yes. Father Roccatani—for the time being—receives 10,000 florins. The Count de Fresno and the Chevalier de la Rosa, 5,000 florins each.[1]

Even as a dupe Francis Joseph managed to preserve his characteristic prudence and economy. Though he did buy the gold brick, he bought it at the bargain counter.

IX

The new Director of the Mint continued the experiments. One day in August he found, to his amazement, that the iron pot in which on that memorable Ninth of March he had discovered gold did not contain gold any more. That, however, was easily explained. Of course

[1] Together about $10,000.

the gold had retransmuted into silver. September 30 came—no conclusive result. In the spring of 1869 he found, in a retort, 0.776 per cent. gold. That was—an achievement? No, a mistake. Schrötter, as he now ascertained, had inadvertently mixed a little gold amalgam with the silver.

Perhaps the first success was also due to an inaccuracy of this sort.

The Chevalier de la Rosa, somewhere in Italy, has lost all interest in the Roccatanian method of gold-making. He asks to be appointed Austrian Consul at Suez. He is turned down. He tries to sell some slightly used Chilean warships to the Austrian admiralty for five million florins. The Austrian admiralty does not want to buy. But a small gratuity is forthcoming, and Colonel Don Antonio Jimenez de la Rosa disappears in limbo, where he presumably is joined by the Conde de Fresno y Landres.

Father Roccatani inquires, occasionally, concerning Schrötter's experiments. Meanwhile—one must live—he applies for the chaplaincy to the Austrian embassy at Rome. The State Councillor Braun loses his temper, and requests the inventor to discontinue the correspondence.

And Francis Joseph? One of the most enviable privileges of a sovereign is the right to forget. Who dares to remind him? Smartly, the Emperor clicks his mental heels and dismisses obtrusive facts from the audience chamber of his memory.

He was still looking forward to the Day.

X

No Austrian could ever have tricked him like that. Austrians were "subjects"; the implications of the word *Untertan*, its distant evocation of a ridiculous physical pos-

ture, gave colour to all his dealings with citizens of his own Empire. He despised them—not *because* they were subjects, but *in order to* fix them in their subjection.

Foreigners, on the other hand, fascinated him. Contact with, even, to a degree, submission to, them, was his outlet for the romance that, repressed, maimed, emasculated, was still ineradicably present in some dim seldom-aired closet of his soul, an imprisoned yearning for flight from the life sentence to penal servitude in the gaol called self, for transfusion into other modes of existence. Being imposed upon by the Chevalier de la Rosa, by the Conde de Fresno y Landres, and the Reverend Father Romualdo Roccatani, was Francis Joseph's Mexico. That the adventure cost him twenty thousand florins, while Maximilian paid for the equivalent with his life, was a just measure of the difference in the two brothers' respective characters; and character, as Heraclitus said twenty-eight centuries ago, is Fate.

Francis Joseph's passion, such as it was, for schemes brought by strangers was a plodding nature's suddenly flashing hunger for the short cut. His attitude to Froebel's plan of a Congress of Princes at Frankfort shows the full pattern of the gold-making adventure; Schrötter was then called Biegeleben, and de la Rosa, Dörnberg.

Up to 1870 three out of his five Foreign Ministers were non-Austrians: the Swiss, Buol; the Swabian, Rechberg; and the Saxon, Beust.

The Saxon Beust: Francis Joseph's super-foreigner who sold him the greatest gold-making scheme of his life. He assured the Emperor that South Germany would march with him against Prussia. Yet when on the eve of his appointment he went to Munich for soundings, he was told by the Bavarian Premier von der Pfordten that Bavaria—the strongest South German state—would do

nothing of the kind. He begged Beust not to pursue a policy of hatred and revenge which would only benefit France. Beust protested his innocence, but von der Pfordten read him like an open book, and later remarked to the Prussian envoy Prince Reuss: "Francis Joseph has made this inconceivable choice because he is fired with the spirit of revenge and needs a tool."

What Francis Joseph did not know when he made his contract with the Saxon alchemist Beust; what Beust himself, at the time, did not know, was that Bismarck had stolen a march on both of them: in August, 1866, Prussia concluded a defensive alliance with the South German states, including Bavaria.

Then: Beust persuaded him to trade away the unity of the Empire for the hope (there was no express pledge) that the Hungarians would support his war of revenge against Prussia. As a matter of fact the Hungarians never had such intention. In May, 1867—one month before the coronation—Count Csaky, one of the most influential Magyar grandees, told the Prussian diplomat Theodor von Bernhardi that Prussia need not worry now that Beust had placed Imperial policy under Hungarian control; for the Hungarians did not mean to fight for the restoration of Austrian primacy in Germany, as they knew only too well that if Austria succeeded their turn would come next.

When the day of the great test arrived there was no trace of gold to be found in either of the Saxon alchemist Beust's famous and expensive retorts.

XI

They were expensive, those retorts. One of them contained, among other valuable ingredients, Francis Joseph's pride.

Only in 1865 he wrote with contempt to his cousin and friend Albert of Saxony of "the man in Paris" who was the common enemy. Now Solferino was forgotten, and Villafranca. Forgotten the rape of Lombardy; forgotten the blackmail of 1866 which made Francis Joseph cede Venetia to an Italy beaten to pulp. That the Maximilian episode was forgotten went, to use one of Francis Joseph's pet phrases, "without saying." Even the interest of the Holy Catholic Church was forgotten. In '65 Francis Joseph refused to sell Venetia because he was worried about the safety of the Papal state. In '70 Francis Joseph was so anxious to secure the alliance of the godless Italian kingdom against Prussia that he was willing to see Rome, held for the Pope by a French garrison, occupied by the troops of Vittorio Emanuele. How must the champion of Legitimacy, descendant of the Most Catholic Spanish kings, have felt when Napoleon, the upstart, the ex-freemason, politely informed him that he would not think of sacrificing the Pope's cause for a political advantage?! (The Spanish Eugénie was a very good Catholic indeed; and to Napoleon, at this juncture, the support of French bishops at home seemed more important than the support of Italy abroad.)

In the spring of 1870 the Archduke Albrecht went to Paris to discuss a military alliance. War with Prussia was drawing near. Then General Lebrun came to Vienna to work out plans with the Austrian General Staff. On July 15, 1870, war was declared. Austria-Hungary was not ready. The General Staff could not send an army; but Beust sent a telegram. "Austria-Hungary," he assured Napoleon, "regards France's cause as her own, and desires to contribute to the success of French arms."

"Austria," Napoleon might have quoted Palmerston's jibe of '54, "supports us . . . but only morally." De-

spite feverish efforts the Austrian army continued not being ready. Also, Alexander II of Russia saw the time had come to repay Napoleon for his aggression and Francis Joseph for his perfidy in the Crimean War. His silent pressure alone would have held Austria in check; but pressure came from another quarter, too, actuated by quite a different motive. In the decisive Crown Council of July 18 the Hungarian Premier Count Julius Andrassy declared categorically that Hungary was not going to fight.

Still Beust hoped. Still Francis Joseph hesitated. And Prussia acted. As in '66, the almost incredible speed of her attack crushed the enemy before he had had time to unfold his strength. On September 4, 1870, the Emperor of the French, with his army, surrendered at Sedan.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE CONQUEROR

I

Sedan sealed the sentence which had been pronounced at Königgrätz. Then Paris fell. On January 18, 1871, in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles, the assembled German Princes acclaimed the King of Prussia as German Emperor. The lid was nailed on the coffin wherein slumbered the great Mid-European Empire of Charles V and Ferdinand II.

Francis Joseph hesitated no more. Within a fortnight he dismissed the German Liberal cabinet which had been in power since the conclusion of the pact with Hungary. Francis Joseph disliked the German Liberals for many reasons; one was that they first emasculated and then annulled the Concordat. So keen was the Emperor's distaste that it drove him to an unprecedented step: through the Count Langrand-Dumonceau, a Belgian financier of ultramontane connections, a friend of the Prince of Thurn and Taxis, he launched an intrigue with the Vatican against his own ministers. Against his first Constitutional cabinet. The Pope, who had denounced the new Austrian charter as "utterly damnable" and "null and void," was pleased, and instructed the Austrian bishops to make open war on the Government. The

result was an additional shrinking of State authority, and a split in the ranks of the Austrian Germans into a clerical and an anti-clerical camp which the Slavs turned to good account.

One morning the Count Beust awoke to the surprise of his life. He saw by the papers that the Emperor had appointed Count Hohenwart, Federalist and ardent patron of the Czechs, to Premier. His Majesty obviously did not deem it necessary to inform his Chancellor in advance. His Majesty was obviously afraid of a scene; for even Beust, most pliable of courtiers, might have dropped an unpleasant word or two in reference to the Emperor's choice.

For Hohenwart's appointment was Francis Joseph's declaration of war on the German element in Austria. That federalistic and pro-Slav tendency whose first faint buds had shot forth in the previous experiments of Goluchowski and Belcredi, now ripened to full bloom. As in the previous instances the Emperor's face-about was prompted by disappointment; but now disappointment was strengthened tenfold by vengeance and by fear. Hohenwart's appointment was Francis Joseph's answer to the attempts by the German people of Vienna to celebrate Sedan Day as a national holiday. Those attempts, valiantly suppressed by the police on the Emperor's command, and a number of similar manifestations, brought home to Francis Joseph the crushing fact that the Germans of Austria did not give up the old *Grossdeutsch* hope of belonging to a great united German nation; but a great united German nation meant now, after Königgrätz, after Sedan, after the scene in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles, the elimination of Habsburg. Therefore German nationalism, which before '66 had time and again been exploited by Francis Joseph as a weapon in

the contest for hegemony, now came to be regarded as a subversive anti-dynastic force. The German population of Austria, heretofore the main pillar of the State, the Emperor's bodyguard, now were placed under police supervision as potential rebels and traitors.

By the same token, the Czechs became the Emperor's favourites. He issued a solemn promise to have himself crowned King of Bohemia and to restore the lands of the Crown of St. Venceslaus as a unit. The Government promulgated an ordinance providing that all officials in Bohemia and Moravia must be able to speak both German and Czech. This seemed fair enough; but as the fewest Germans could speak Czech and most Czechs could speak German, it amounted to the virtual turning over of the civil service to the Slavs. These measures, and several others bespeaking the same tendency, brought the indignation of Austrian Germans to the boiling point. They were not conscious of any guilt; and they were being punished. Vienna was astir with riots; the shadow of martial law hung once more over the Imperial capital.

At last a combined attack by Beust and the Hungarian premier Count Andrassy lifted Hohenwart out of the saddle in the very moment of his supposed triumph. The Emperor had just told him that there was "no turning back"; the next day he dismissed him. Beust exulted; but not long. Within a fortnight came his turn.

Most unwillingly, yielding only to Beust's and Andrassy's threats of dire things to happen, did Francis Joseph drop Hohenwart, symbol of his revenge on the traitorous Germans. Most unwillingly he recalled the detested German Liberals to power, with the Count Adolf Auersperg as head of the Cabinet. Nor did he conceal his disgust. In the first Council he exhorted his new ministers: "Try to get on with your own party. I shall not

place difficulties in your way, for I don't like to change." He did not say, "I don't like change." He said, "I don't like *to* change." The difference? "*Ich wechsle nicht gerne*": stereotyped phrase of Viennese middle class housewife in her inaugural address to newly engaged cook.

That curt Imperial pronouncement contained another choice bit of malice, too. "Try to get on with your own party." Notoriously the greatest difficulty of the German liberal leaders was to get on with their own party. The German liberals were children of the old Metternichian system—rebellious children of a despotic parent. They were brought up on the taste and smell of political evil. They regarded the State as the sum total of its citizens' grievances, the Government as the arch enemy, and antagonism between prince and people as the spirit of progress. They happened to be mostly lawyers by profession, and they viewed the great political issues as law-suits which the plaintiff, the people, had to win against the defendant, the government. Rather narrow a view for an opposition; and they were now the governmental party. Full of the finest principles and best intentions, gifted, highly educated, of unimpeachable integrity, they were the worst practical statesmen imaginable. They made war on everything and everybody: the Emperor, the ministry, the opposition, the army, the provinces, the clergy, the Slavs, the Hungarians, the court clique, the demagogues, the aristocracy, the lower classes. When they ran short of enemies they made war on their own selves. For seven years—an unusual duration, attesting the still inferior political ability of their opponents—they remained in power; at the end of that period the fate of the Kilkenny cats overtook them. Their one lasting achievement was self-extinction.

II

In 1849 his portrait swung gently from Francis Joseph's gibbet in front of the Neugebäude at Budapest, where Francis Joseph's judges were holding their bloody assizes; that he did not swing in person was due to his precaution in crossing the Turkish frontier betimes. Then came years of exile, spent chiefly in Paris where *le beau pendu* was one of the beloved and envied heroes of aristocratic salons. After his return home Andrassy became one of the leaders who with Deák negotiated the Compromise; when the constitution was restored Deák, with unmatched modesty, declined the Premiership offered him by the monarch and proposed Andrassy. The one-time rebel thus became Francis Joseph's first constitutional Prime Minister in Hungary. After three years' term in that office, on the dismissal of Beust, he was appointed Foreign Minister of the Dual Monarchy.

An unusual career, and an unusual personality. The Count Julius Andrassy has been called the typical Magyar cavalier; he was more than that: his apotheosis. He was handsome, smart, dazzling; equally irresistible on the sofas of boudoirs and the floor of debate; he knew the world; he had flashes of true insight. He combined the exotic charm of a descendant of fiery steppe horsemen with the polish of a Paris *incroyable.*

But—perhaps he was too handsome. His locks were too perfectly curled, his moustache too dashing, his eyes too sparkling, his eloquence too eloquent. He had in him just the faintest trace of a *Zigeunerprimas*—one of those dark-skinned raven-tressed Hungarian gipsy orchestra leaders whose slender swaying figures and glowing melancholy sensuous tunes enchanted the feminine clientele of fashionable restaurants in Western capitals. Nor was

the resemblance purely external. His statesmanship was undoubtedly gifted and vigorous, like their music; like their music, it also had an improvised, unstable, *rubato* quality. He lacked substantial schooling; he played European politics by the ear as the gipsy chiefs played their airs; his performance, like theirs, intoxicated in the evening, and petered out in pangs of headache the morning after.

He was, above all, a Magyar nobleman. Supremacy of his race (which in the current political *jargon* really meant his clan) was his Koran. It was a purpose to which every consideration must be subordinated. His foreign policy draped a curtain of aggressive vigour to hide a great abiding fear—the fear which from this time onward remained one of the pivots of Austro-Hungarian political life: the Magyar fear of the rising Slav flood. It was to dam that flood that the Magyar leaders foisted the artificial system of Dualism on the reconstructed Empire.

Andrassy's foreign policy followed two convergent lines. His main objectives were, first, to check Russian expansion southward (like all Magyars, he hated Russia for her rôle in '49); second, to nip in the bud the Slav national movement in the Balkans. It was through realizing the weak defensive position of a Hungary ruled, in the midst of hostile groups of Slavs and Roumanians, by a small minority of Magyar nobles, that he discovered that offensive course which was to be his contribution to Austro-Hungarian polity: the civilizing mission of Austria-Hungary in the Balkans, with the conquest of Salonica as final prize. It was, of course, a rediscovery of the programme of Prince Eugene of Savoy and the Emperor Joseph II, suppressed by the legitimistic passivity of Metternich and his school. Every gain in the Balkans,

Andrassy argued, secured the stability of the monarchy on the one hand, and set back Russian aggression on the other.

There was something typically and deliciously Austrian in the fact that the first foreign minister in twenty years who tried to inject a new idea, a positive and active concept, into the petrified mandarinesque frame of the Ballplatz should have been, at the very outset, driven into carrying out a policy diametrically opposed to that idea. In 1873 Andrassy signed, for Francis Joseph, the Three Emperors' Alliance with Russia and Germany. Andrassy's original plan of concluding an alliance with the new German Empire and thus securing military backing for Dualism was amended by Bismarck into the three-cornered treaty. A strange treaty: it meant something different to each of the contracting parties; for Bismarck regarded it as insurance against the revanche propensities of France, while the Czar welcomed it as the revival of the Holy Alliance in support of autocracy. What even Bismarck, usually well informed, did not know was that his two allies spent most of their time devising schemes for stabbing him in the back. The Czar Alexander II hated and distrusted Bismarck no less than did Francis Joseph: their common aversion was the platform upon which they met. Alexander regarded Bismarck as a secret revolutionist insidiously working for a German Republic and the overthrow of the monarchic system in general! Nor did the alliance with Germany prevent Francis Joseph from carrying on, through Field Marshal the Archduke Albrecht as proxy, not only delicious and delicate little entertainments with Russian statesmen on the—purely theoretical—possibility of an imbroglio with Berlin, but even a thrilling flirtation with President MacMahon of France and the French general staff.

At the same time the Russian alliance opened up to Francis Joseph an avenue of military glory and territorial compensation. It was at this time that the idea of occupying the Turkish provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina first emerged in the military clique surrounding the Emperor. It was not a new idea; Radetzky and Tegethoff had advised it by way of acquiring a hinterland to the long and thin Dalmatian coast. But this military consideration was only secondary; what was much more important was that the inclusion of two Slav provinces in the monarchy was expected to create an irresistible Slav preponderance which would upset Dualism and eventually restore autocracy. It was another of those complicated and irrational Austrian facts which made the politics of the Dual Empire so difficult to understand for the Western world: the militarists and Andrassy advocated the same course for practically the opposite reasons.

A favourable opportunity for invading the provinces was afforded by the anti-Turkish rising of the population in 1875. Andrassy let it go by. But when in 1878 the Congress of Berlin assembled to revise the peace of San Stefano whereby Russia, after her costly but complete victory over Turkey, settled down before the very gates of Constantinople, Andrassy, who was one of the promoters of that gathering, presented Austria-Hungary's claim, endorsed by Russia on previous occasions, and obtained a mandate to occupy the provinces. Proudly he telegraphed to Francis Joseph: "The gate of the Orient is open to your Majesty."

So it was; but the gatekeepers were an unpleasant lot. Andrassy talked of a parade with a squadron of Hussars and a military band. The parade turned out a bloody war, prolonged by the usual incredible Austrian

Schlamperei; the Austrian general staff, in replying to the charge that the expeditionary force had been much too small, proffered the wonderful argument that it was better so, as had the army been larger the Bosnian snipers would have had more targets. At last the natives' heroic resistance was broken, and the black-and-yellow flag hoisted on the konak at Sarajevo.

The first success, military and diplomatic, in a quarter century. Refreshing change after a series of blows. Francis Joseph was duly elated. Still, the difficulties involved in the new acquisition were enormous; and Austria would not have been Austria had these difficulties been radically settled then and there. Instead, they were overlaid with a thick maze of half-measures. In order not to annoy Turkey nor Russia more than could be helped, the provinces were not annexed, only "occupied"; suzerainty was retained by Turkey. Nor was the status of the provinces within the Dual Monarchy itself fixed. Both the Germans of Austria and the Magyars of Hungary opposed incorporation in their own respective state on the ground that they did not want a new contingent of Slavs; but both the Germans and the Magyars opposed with no less vigour incorporation by the other state. To organize the provinces as a separate third unit was the last thing that the Germans and Magyars desired, as such a third unit would necessarily have become the nucleus of a South Slav kingdom and Trialism as the supplanter of Dualism. But they could not be made into an Imperial colony either; for legally there existed no Empire.

So they concocted a provisional arrangement which satisfied nobody. But even that arrangement had a phase which was not provisional, but very permanent indeed. It was the hatred of the Serbs of Serbia who saw that Austria-Hungary thwarted their dream of

national union by grasping the richest of Serb lands. From the moment of its birth the newly-delivered Serbian nation regarded itself as the Piedmont of Southern Slavdom, and focussed its dreams on the disruption of Austria. And behind the Serb aspiration loomed the shadow of Russia, jealous, eager, ruthless.

When Andrassy returned from the Congress of Berlin he was hailed, especially in Hungary, as a conqueror. He had scored not one triumph, but three. One was the Bosnian mandate. The second the reduction of Greater Bulgaria, which had been created by Russia at San Stefano as an outpost on the road to Constantinople, into a small insignificant state, and the corresponding strengthening, at Bulgaria's expense, of the new Serbian principality, supposedly amenable to Austrian influence. The third, the setback to Russian ambitions involved in the first two.

Triumphs? To provide Serbia with an ever-burning grievance, to increase her power for redress and revenge, and to drive her, virtually, into the arms of the rival? The future was to show.

Russia was no less infuriated against Germany than against Austria. Had not the Czar, by enforcing Austrian neutrality in '70–71, assisted the victory over France? And now Germany supported every Austrian pretension. Such, then, was Bismarck's gratitude. An epigram, coined by some Russian general or other, attained great popularity in the high society of St. Petersburg: "The road to Berlin leads over Vienna."

III

This sudden flare of Russian hostility had, for the time being, one momentous result. On October 7, 1879,

an offensive and defensive alliance was concluded between the German Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy "to preserve the peace of Europe."

It was Francis Joseph's solemn avowal to all the world that he had surrendered to the inevitable.

On the next day Andrassy, who negotiated and signed the treaty, retired from office, weary and disgusted. "Verily," he remarked, "it is no pleasure to be a minister in Austria-Hungary."

The alliance which had just been consummated was his life's great work. And he saw his life's work undermined by the monarch whom he served with so much devotion and so much success.

Two months earlier Francis Joseph once more dropped the German Liberals, who had earned his acute displeasure by opposing the occupation of Bosnia, and appointed to Premier Count Edward Taaffe, who immediately announced a federalist pro-Slav course.

Thus in the very moment when the German alliance became the cornerstone of Austrian foreign policy, Austrian internal policy turned anti-German. Count Taaffe lasted fourteen years. In those fourteen years Austria was governed by cynical dishonesty feeding makeshifts and lies to the storming needs of the moment. Constant muddle hardened the arteries of the body politic; the basic principle of the Habsburg Monarchy since 1867, that Dualism of the German and Magyar minorities which at its best was a fiction imposed by force, became a mocking pretence twice hollow; for in Austria the Germans, who nominally ruled against right, were in reality suppressed, and Magyar supremacy in Hungary was coupled to a phantom.

Those were the bright autumn days of Francis Joseph's second bloom. He had lost the battle of his life; but

that tough, irrepressible, desperate will-to-power which was the kernel of his nature contrived an adjustment to the inalterable facts of defeat. There was a constitution in each of his countries; but those constitutions were empty shells enlivened by the Imperial will. By observing the outward form Francis Joseph crushed the substance, and he ruled as of old, as his grandfather had ruled, in the privacy of his study, reading reports and signing decrees and appointments from five A.M. to eight P.M., receiving his ministers who were, in reality, skilled tailors engaged in fitting constitutional cloaks to autocratic methods—ministers who were not trustees of the people but henchmen of his pleasure.

He was spared the trouble of thinking. Count Taaffe took care of the minimum of that painful process indispensable in the business of state; that's why he loved Taaffe above any other of his Premiers. Armed with his cynical conceit, that faithful servant mounted guard before the Emperor's door and kept in proper distance anything that looked like an intellectual worry.

Francis Joseph was only forty-nine, and in enviably perfect physical condition. But his hopes were dead; his growth had stopped; his one purpose from now on was to preserve that *status quo* of personality which is comfort. Comfort: not in the vulgar sense, though. Francis Joseph rose at four in the morning and sat at his desk till eight in the evening. Sophisticated propagandists and naïve subjects spoke of his self-sacrificing devotion to duty. In the depths of psychic reality he spent those sixteen or eighteen hours in performing a rite at the altar of *Divus Cæsar*—omniscient, omnipotent—Himself. Performing that rite, year in, year out, lest the world, his world, collapse. Governing wearily, yet ceaselessly, governing, governing, weary monarch gov-

erning a weary empire, looking toward his sleep in the night, a sleep made restful by consciousness of duty done. Old age was closing in on a man who had never been young. The century, too, was growing old with him.

CHAPTER XIX

THE SON

I

SHE had feared the fate of Josephine Beauharnais whom Napoleon cast off because she bore him no heir. Her mother Ludovica reassured her. "You have had two daughters—you are not a barren woman." True. Still. Her mother-in-law Sophie made her life one endless torment with her taunts. "Oh well—what would you—Elizabeth and a son! Ridiculous!"

At last, in self-defence, she bore a son. On August 21, 1858. Toward nightfall the thunder of one hundred and one guns told the Imperial capital the glad tidings. In the château of Laxenburg a proud father vented sovereign ecstasy by placing the Golden Fleece into the crib of a screaming and kicking little thing, most unprincely, and remarkably lacking in appreciation of the honour thus bestowed.

Guns—one hundred and one: each hit the Archduchess Sophie, and shattered a hope. She saw she lost the battle; yet she did not surrender. What of it? Any woman could bear a son; but not every woman could bring up a Crown Prince of Austria. Elizabeth least of all. How could she, when she did not know herself how to behave? Once more Sophie blessed Spanish etiquette. For the Empress of Austria it was forbidden to bring up

her son. In her stead, the ceremonial provided a deputy-mother. Her Excellency the Aja. Francis Joseph had had an Aja. All Crown Princes had had Ajas. The Crown Prince Rudolf was to have an Aja too.

Sophie selected her. A Bavarian, of course. The Baroness Welden. Well-born, well-bred, religious, unimpeachably chaste. She had never seen a small child in her life. Not at close range. Had no idea just what one looked like. She was undecided of character, and feeble of health. But she was full of good intentions. Before taking up her post she went to Munich to stay with her friend, Frau von Zurheim, and took lessons in picking up a baby.

II

Had she been the most efficient expert nurse in the world, Elizabeth would still have hated her. She meant to keep her son. Her two daughters had been taken away from her, and see what happened: the eldest, little Sophie, died twelve months old. She clung to Rudolf out of pride and love: she was still close to the animal reality of motherhood. But the mother-in-law won this time. They took Rudolf away from her, and gave him to the Baroness Welden.

Another link broken between husband and wife. Not many remained whole. Francis Joseph was resuming the habits of his bachelorhood. Sophie, always a careful provident mother, discreetly assisted. The draft in the Hofburg corridors carried strange whispers to Elizabeth's ears. Nor were whispers all. In the winter of 1860 the Empress fell ill. Very ill. Bronchial trouble, said the official version. But ugly tales were current, then and ever since: Elizabeth's illness had nothing to do with lungs. She went South; but her departure from the

Hofburg was unprecedentedly sudden. For a while she stayed at Madeira. The next six years she spent on travels. A few flying visits to Vienna when they could not be helped: then off again. In 1866 she returned. There was a reconciliation. Rudolf was eight years old. A little stranger.

Elizabeth was only twenty-four; but her heavy Wittelsbach mind was already haunted by the spectre of aging. She realized with a shiver that her boy was growing up.

III

His education was stricter even than that of his father. His classes began at the age of four, in four languages at the same time: German, French, Hungarian, and Czech. Latin and Polish were added later. From seven in the morning till eight in the evening the little Crown Prince trudged in the heavy harness of a prospective monarch. Elizabeth pulled the reins very tight. She was a fanatic of physical exercise. The boy Francis Joseph had had a wholesome measure of it—the soundest side of his otherwise cramped upbringing; but the boy Rudolf was to have an overdose. Riding, swimming, fencing, dancing, shooting. And drilling, of course. He was a weakly child, rather under-developed except mentally; his body was to be steeled. Elizabeth had some strange notions. One winter morning the Emperor heard shouts beneath his windows. It was seven o'clock. He looked out: knee-deep in the snow, a miserable little boy drilling, by the light of a lantern, to commands issuing from a window. The Crown Prince. Francis Joseph instantly ordered this "murderous" exercise stopped.

Much of this overstrained, overcrowded, overstimulated childhood passed in the park surrounding the

château of Laxenburg where Rudolf was born. In the park of Laxenburg whose English informality and woodland romance Francis Joseph, at the age of twelve, rather despised. Rudolf, on his part, decidedly preferred it to the magnificence, the symmetry, the fixed forms, of Schönbrunn. He was a gifted boy, quick of perception, vivid of fancy, of insatiable curiosity; but he disliked continuous effort; he could not concentrate; restraint of any description was to him like poison—it literally made him ill; and he was subject to violent moods, swinging from exuberance to utter dejection. An authentic little Wittelsbach—Elizabeth's son.

His unsteady nerves were a source of anxiety and irritation to his mother, and she resolved on a heroic cure. In the dead of the night, in Rudolf's bedroom, an attendant had to fire blank charges from a pistol close to the little boy's head. Often the inmates of the Imperial palace were routed from their sleep by these shots—shots that pierced the night in the bedroom of the Crown Prince Rudolf.

IV

Eighteen eighty. He was twenty-two, and, so his father judged, ripe to perform the dynastic duty of procreation. A healthy young princess of a Catholic house—an actually reigning house if possible—was required. A cadet branch, that of Coburg, of the House of Saxony occupied the throne of Belgium. King Leopold's second daughter, Princess Stephanie, fulfilled the specifications. To be sure, the Coburgs of Belgium had provided, so far, the House of Habsburg with a ghost. Charlotte of Mexico was still wandering in the dimmed halls and corridors of Bouchout. But her name was never mentioned; and it was understood that little

Stephanie was made of much sounder stuff than Maximilian's high-strung bride.

Francis Joseph's suit was brought to King Leopold by his Minister to the Belgian Court, Count Bohuslav Chotek. The Belgian Majesties were overjoyed (Queen Henriette was born an Austrian Archduchess) and details were easily agreed. On March 6, 1880, the Crown Prince Rudolf arrived at Brussels. Next day he attended a family luncheon at the château of Laeken. After the repast the august company repaired to the blue audience room; Rudolf and Stephanie were marooned on the way, as if by oversight, in a salon. A few minutes later the young couple emerged, with cheeks flushed and obviously satisfied; and King Leopold took Count Chotek by the arm and announced the engagement. "I am very, very happy," fluted the protector of the Congo Free State, as Rudolf was observed fastening into his buttonhole a small bouquet of lilies of the valley worn at the luncheon by Stephanie.

Count Chotek's wife and two eldest daughters were among the guests who witnessed this elating scene. The good Count was blessed with an abundance of female issue; at home no fewer than five excited little Countesses awaited the big sisters' account of the royal engagement. One of them was Sophie—a tall lanky girl of twelve, all legs and big brown eyes and self-consciousness—but with a chin bespeaking character and will power. Did little Sophie Chotek, as she listened to the elder girls' narrative, dream herself, flapper-like, into the heroine's rôle—did the half-query, half-wish flash across her mind, "What if the heir to the Austrian throne married *me?*"

V

May and a cloud of flags and flowers enwrapped Vienna: hundreds of thousands of loyal subjects gaped

at the procession in which the Crown Prince Rudolf, after fourteen months' engagement, carried home his beautiful Belgian bride.

It did not take him another fourteen months to find out his mistake. Stephanie, to put it mildly, was a bore. Rudolf's high-strung, passionate nature, brimming over with enthusiasm for beauty, for truth, justice and brotherhood, was chilled by contact with this fair doll built of silk and asbestos and religious observance minus religion. Rudolf was interested in politics in its largest aspects, in the progress of civilization and democracy, in the human race's delivery from the shackles of tyranny and superstition. Stephanie was interested in dresses and court gossip. He was brilliant and athirst for life. She was dull and smug.

He sought comfort in work. He was heir to the throne of one of the world's great Empires. A tremendous responsibility lay on his shoulders. He must learn how to discharge it: the science and art of government. He yearned for participation in the affairs of state.

He met with granite rebuttal. His father would have none of his meddling. What? Another Maximilian? Francis Joseph had developed a perfect technique for keeping members of his family in their places. Politics, any phase of public life in general save the dullest rites of representation, were taboo to them. A whole division of the secret police was devoted to checking the movements of Archdukes. They were not allowed to consort with the people—with any one beyond the high nobility and the officers' corps. If an Archduke was becoming popular in his garrison town he was transferred to another. To his son—his supplanter some day, symbol of his own passing—Francis Joseph was doubly strict. Rudolf had, at an early age, manifested unorthodox, rebellious tendencies. He had to be suppressed.

In many ways Rudolf's development paralleled that of Maximilian. Both were fired by intellectual curiosity, by imagination, by sympathy with the masses, and by a keen sense of self-importance and a desire of self-assertion. What both needed was an outlet. It was denied to them. They wished to be helpers; they were driven into the rôle of inactive critics, growing bitterer with the increasing burden of inactivity. But of the two Rudolf was by far the more substantial. Maximilian had been vague, soft, all curves, feminine, artistic. Rudolf, by no means a strong character, had elements of strength in him: he had a certain harsh angular intellectual courage, an aggressive, positive turn. Maximilian at home remained a grumbler and a poet; Rudolf became a scientific dilettante and pamphleteer: secret informant, correspondent and anonymous leader writer of one of Vienna's great liberal dailies.

With a despair that pumped steady nourishment to his reproaches against his father, and was in turn nourished by these, Rudolf recognized how backward the Austro-Hungarian Empire was in comparison with the great countries of the West. Industry, commerce, general prosperity, public education lagged shamefully behind. The administration was inefficient and corrupt. The nobility parasitic and arrogant. Rudolf dreamed of reform. He wished to throw open the windows of the close stuffy rooms of Austrian government and admit the fresh air of Western liberalism. His father appointed him Inspector-General of the Infantry whose duties consisted of devising new black patent leather straps and cartouches for the foot guards to replace pipeclayed white ones, and of supervising the shine on the boots of infantry regiments at parades.

Rudolf detested the soldier game. Not that he was

an antimilitarist. He regarded the Austrian army as a great preparatory school of democratic citizenship and Imperial allegiance where all the various races were brought together on a plane of brotherhood and common service; but above all, as the bulwark of Imperial unity and the liberal state in the Josephine sense. But he hated constraint; he despised the idolatry of military routine, the eternal fretting with endless trifles of drill and uniforms and service regulations that to his father represented the essence of life.

Superficially their relations were excruciatingly correct. Francis Joseph was most courteous to Rudolf; but it was always Emperor to Crown Prince, never father to son. His very courtesy was designed to emphasize an unbridgeable gulf. Francis Joseph never failed to thank his heir for letters, to inquire about his health, to congratulate him on his birthday or the bagging of a twelve-antler, to send his regards to Stephanie. But all this was by way of discharging a rigid duty; it had no trace of heartfelt interest in it. When he telegraphed to Rudolf to come down to Gödöllö, the hunting castle near Budapest, the Emperor never omitted the line, "Apartment in the château goes without saying." Why, then, did he say it still? It was his way of reminding Rudolf that he, the Emperor, was master and host, and Rudolf a mere guest.

The grown-up Crown Prince of Austria-Hungary could not go to the Opera without begging his father's leave; for he was not allowed to buy an ordinary seat and mingle with the common herd, and he had to apply to the Emperor for the use of the Imperial box.

He sought drains for his pent-up energies. One he found in scientific study: geography and natural history especially. He wrote articles on travel, on ornithology;

Crown Prince Rudolf

Aged Six

The Emperor Francis Joseph with the Children of his Daughter, the Archduchess Marie Valérie

he undertook the editorship of a large illustrated symposium entitled "The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in Word and Picture." Then, of course, there was sport. Perhaps the one trait he had in common with his father was his love for shooting. But the two differed even in their agreement. Francis Joseph refused to combine his pastime with risks. He felt that he owed it to his peoples to take care of his august person. Possibly the wholesale annihilation of life without any danger to his own stimulated his sense of godlike power. His favourite game were stag and chamois: strenuous exercise with safety. Rudolf's preference was for stalking the huge bear of the Transylvanian Alps. He loved danger; he was always prepared to take his life in his hands.

VI

Had his father given Rudolf an opportunity to serve him and the state, the young man, with his tense resolve to excel his conservative sire by world-improving deeds, might have decocted his budding progressive and liberal leanings into some mild sensible programme of reform. But he found all doors to the responsibility of possession locked. Possession present and future; for his inborn Wittelsbach pessimism whispered that his father, much stronger of build and sturdier of health than himself, would survive him. He withdrew into the negative attitudes of the dispossessed.

The degree of radicalism is a matter of environment. By objective standards Rudolf's liberalism and republicanism may be judged a rather tame affair; to his father, his cousins, to the Court and the conservative nobility it must have seemed sheer revolutionary madness. What was much more important was that while he had purged him-

self of the prejudices of his birth to the extent of professing his republican and democratic principles, the toxin of his antecedents still so impregnated his blood that he was unable to profess them without a consciousness of horrible, unnatural guilt. But this consciousness, fraught with a sense of being watched and persecuted, of having burnt his bridges, drove him still further into the morass of heterodoxy until in the end he felt his foothold slipping.

And undeniably there was something monstrous in the fact that the Crown Prince of one of the three great conservative Empires should be a fervent admirer of republican institutions. Rudolf adored France; he saw in her the fountain head of liberalism, of all great ideas of human progress. Writing, in 1882, to his friend Moriz Szeps, publisher of the liberal daily *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, he pointed to the "happy, wealthy, powerful French Republic which today, twelve years after the disaster of Sedan, offers irrefutable evidence of the truth that republics can achieve great things in Europe."

He hated and detested Germany. "Make his education as un-German as possible," Elizabeth is said to have admonished his governor Count Latour; and the precept was carried out with success. He saw in the new German Empire nothing but "a swollen-up Prussian barracks." The victory of 1870

> "bestowed upon the German people, in addition to their numberless petty kings and princes, an Emperor as well; they now have to pay for a far bigger army, and the idea of imperial unity, fostered and drilled by an arrogant soldiery, police, and bureaucracy, floats on the wings of a made-to-order patriotism over the points of bayonets. Where would the Germany of today be after a war lost to republican France? What would the Germans do once their army was shattered? They would

again sing the Marseillaise, as they did a hundred years ago."

The great tenderness shown by the German government to Vienna in these days is due only and solely to fear and jealousy of the thriving French republic.

What he loathed in the Germany of the Prussian dispensation was the gross selfish brutality of nationalism. He was an internationalist, a citizen of the world.

> "The principle of nationalism is founded on the basest animal premises; it is the victory of carnal sympathies and instincts over the spiritual and cultural values conferred upon humanity by cosmopolitanism, which means the equality of all nations. I regard all national and racial animosities as an awful retrogression, and it is most significant that it is just the most reactionary elements who worship and exploit these ideas all over Europe."

VII

To Count Eduard Taaffe, the "Edi" of Francis Joseph's boyhood, belongs the sad distinction of having given the ancient Austrian policy of living from hand to mouth its final, classic, most succinct and most cynical formula. Metternich's "Time gained, everything gained," Schwarzenberg's "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," was summed up by this clever, jolly, utterly unscrupulous Irishman in a single verb, deliciously, hopelessly Viennese and Austrian, unknown to other German dialects: *Fortwursteln.* A word incapable of rendition into English, difficult of interpretation: "to worry along" comes close to it, suggesting the idea of tumbling from one makeshift to the next without any reference to a set course; but it does not imply that streak of self-contempt, utterly un-English, that foreboding of ultimate disaster, which squirt from the original like juice

from a crushed ripe berry. Whatever Count Taaffe may have been, he was a man of courage: it took courage, of a sort, to inscribe as a motto across his life's work a word rich with the glee of dishonest bungling over a moment's respite.

He called himself the *Kaiserminister*, or Emperor's minister. That description, first proposed in an interview given out after his appointment, condensed his programme: to do the Emperor's will. Through fourteen years, the record term in Austrian annals, he remained true to his pledge. Doing the Emperor's will consistently, uninterruptedly, during fourteen years, in a constitutional State, involved cheating either the Emperor, or the constitution; and Taaffe was his master's true servant. It was the constitution that suffered. "Austria," said the Czech politician Gregr, "is something much worse than an autocracy: it is a State run by bureaucratic despots under the guise of constitutionalism."

Taaffe's recipe was simple if unoriginal. He revived the ancient Habsburg slogan, "*Divide et impera.*" He pitched the Czechs against the Germans, Poles against Ruthenes, Slovenes against Italians, and tricked them all. He knew, however, that uppermost in Francis Joseph's soul was the fear and distrust of the Austrian Germans. He crushed the remnants of the German Liberals by an "iron ring" of Slavs and Clericals. The feud between Czechs and Germans had, by now, become the paramount issue of Austrian political life; it paralyzed the state and corroded the imperial texture like poison. Reconciliation of these two strongest and most advanced races was the first demand on constructive Austrian statesmanship; it was the last thing Taaffe meant to do. Instead, he coined another epigram: "One must keep all nationalities in a state of well-tempered discontent."

It was a very clever epigram; but the results of its application were disastrous. The incessant flow of concessions did not satisfy the Czech nationalists; it only whetted their appetites; with, from their point of view, unimpeachable logic they set as their aim recovery of their full statehood, and regarded each gain as a mere stage. On the other hand, Taaffe's violently pro-Slav course definitely alienated the Austrian Germans from the dynasty. So far the centrifugal tendencies had prevailed among the non-German subject races only: the Czechs flirted with Panslavism, the Poles with a to-be-restored Poland, the Croats and Slovenes with South Slav unity, the "unredeemed" Italians of South Tyrol with their brethren in the kingdom; the Germans alone were loyal to the Austrian idea. Now the Germans, too, deserted. Exasperated by Taaffe's provocations, they formed, under Georg von Schönerer, a German radical nationalist party, avowedly anti-Habsburg, anti-Austrian, pro-Prussian, pro-Hohenzollern, advocating union with the German Reich.

Rudolf saw clearly that Taaffe's régime sapped the vitality of the Empire, that it deliberately broke up the foundations of to-morrow to stop, with the fragments, the moment's leakages. And worst of all the abuses was the bullying of the German element which created a German irredentism on top of all the others. A course all the more dangerous as it furthered Bismarck's scheme to disrupt the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Rudolf disliked and feared Bismarck.

> "I used to regard him," he declared to Szeps, "as honest, but now I distrust him completely, and with good reason too. Why do they in Berlin support Count Taaffe? Why do they cajole our conservatives and rejoice in the autocratic régime?

> Because they want to shove Austria toward the East. They want Austria to play out its rôle with the Germans and to prove itself incapable of survival in its present form."

Rudolf believed that Bismarck planned to break up Austria, annex the German provinces, and offer the Habsburgs compensation through Balkan conquest.

He saw no hope. For while he distrusted Germany, he realized that Austria could not dispense with her as an ally, for fear of the Russian danger. Rudolf regarded Russia as *the* enemy, not only of Austria, but of all Europe. Russia was the incarnation of the Asiatic principle, of savage despotism and obscurantism, the greatest menace to culture and civilization. More clearly than any other Austrian statesman he saw that Russia strove for the annihilation of the Austrian Empire, not by arbitrary design but by inner necessity, and that the day of reckoning might be postponed, but not averted. And he felt that time was working against Austria.

VIII

In conservative circles generally, and in the immediate surroundings of the Emperor particularly, they regarded him, first as a nuisance, and then as a positive danger.

Rudolf was not only careless, but outright provoking in his conduct. He made his enemies' task easy. On every occasion he demonstrated his antagonism to the Government, his contempt for the court and the nobility, his sympathy for liberal ideas, his friendship for leaders of the opposition, radicals, republicans, scribblers and Jews. He inspired the newspapers of the opposition with information that could clearly be traced to him.

His enemies were not delicate in choosing their weapons. He was constantly surrounded by spies, watched

at home, shadowed abroad; every movement of his was reported. His letters were opened, until he stopped using the mails and only sent communications by his faithful valet, and coded his telegrams.

They fought him by a far-flung net of innuendoes, by elaborately laid traps, by *agents provocateurs*. The banker Wodianer asks an editor in Budapest whether it is true that the journalist Szeps is often seen entering the Vienna Hofburg. Now, the editor in question was known to be in contact with Rudolf; and Wodianer was the Archduke Albrecht's confidant; and the Archduke Albrecht was the recognized chief of the reactionary clique at court which had set a price on Rudolf's head. Or else a well-known scientist asks him for permission to reprint an article of his, on ornithology, in a Vienna newspaper. He consents—what could be more innocent? The article appears, with his signature in bold type. A few weeks later his name is broadcast as one of the sponsors of a questionable promotion scheme launched by the same newspaper. He is surprised—inquires why, how. The publisher is Taaffe's tool; the friendly request for an article was the bait to lure him into a compromising situation.

One of the Archdukes writes him a long epistle on the death of Gambetta. Now, Rudolf made no secret of his boundless admiration for the French statesman. He regarded him as the greatest champion of liberalism, as one of the heroes of the age. His correspondent exults in the passing of the man who had saved the Third Republic. He wallows in the grossest libel. To him Gambetta is nothing but a Freemason, a Jew, and a thief like all Jews. That's why all the newspapers in Austria sing his praise, especially the democratic ones—for aren't they all run by Jews who are united in a conspiracy against throne and altar the world over? Worst of all is the

Neues Wiener Tagblatt, whose editor Szeps is a knave, a scoundrel and a dangerous criminal. It is a republican organ, but sometimes it tries to fool well-meaning loyal people by draping itself with dynastic colours. "Just the other day," now comes the stab, "the *Tagblatt* printed an article, dripping with loyalty, about *you*. How very interesting."

Nor was this mere teasing. Rudolf knew only too well that a blue-pencilled copy of the *Tagblatt* article, accompanied by appropriate comment, possibly also by a duplicate of the letter he had just received, would be spread on the same morning upon his father's desk. A flood of letters anonymous and signed, complaints, incriminating newspaper clippings, pamphlets, whatnot, were sent to the Emperor daily—a regular campaign to discredit him, carefully and expensively organized by a committee whose headquarters, he knew, was located not very far from the palace of the Archduke Albrecht. One of the most diligent wielders of blue pencils and desk scissors was the Premier Taaffe himself. What time he could spare from ruining Austria and polishing *bons mots*, the noble Count invested in denouncing the Crown Prince to the Emperor.

IX

> "We are living in evil times—graft, theft, rabble in high places, the crudest despotism, hand-to-mouth makeshifts—the State is gliding toward ruin. . . . Verily, old Europe is tottering toward its grave. A great, powerful upheaval must come, a social revolution from which, as after a long illness, a new Europe will blossom forth . . ."

Thus Rudolf, toward the end of 1882, to his friend Szeps. The mood gained on him. As time went by his

hopes for adjustment waned: for an understanding with his father which would satisfy his personal cravings and rescue the state: the two appeared as one. The goal—destroy Taaffe! father is getting old—only my regency can save Austria—receded from the plane of normal peaceful development. Slowly a new line of possibilities traced itself in his mind: resort to force.

He took his cue from his enemies. Some noblemen belonging to the extreme wing of reaction hit on the brilliant idea of seeking the alliance of the lower classes against bourgeois liberalism. A certain Baron Vogelsang launched the so-called Christian Socialist movement. There was little socialism and less Christianity in it; the plan was to incite the mob by a few catchwords of social reform and much beer against the upper middle class, largely Jewish, which formed the backbone of the liberal groups. The age-old device of anti-Semitism as red herring was employed. The aristocratic promoters of this transparent scheme could not, of course, enlist respectable socialists; but they linked up with some communist and anarchist agitators who were pleased to take their money, and delivered the goods in a series of hooligan riots in the streets of Vienna.

The disorders continued for weeks, and Rudolf, who at this time commanded a division, was requested by the police to hold his regiments ready for alarm. He complied, indignant but not unwilling.

> "Things may yet come to a pass in Vienna," he wrote to Szeps, "where the army, which as an educated, liberal, state-upholding body is disgusted anyway, will take the whole business in hand, and will clean house, vigorously and, I admit, not very politely, not only among the anarchists but also at the very root of all this evil."

Rudolf at this time went to pains to emphasize his popularity in the army. He asked Szeps to announce in his journal that he was lunching regularly in the various regimental messes, and "to underscore the complete accord between myself and the officers." He proposes to write an article demanding an increase of the officers' pay.

> "The army," he tells Szeps in another letter, "is the only depository of the Imperial idea. One must protect and foster it, and secure its sympathies. The army is almost exclusively middle-class, liberal, imperialist, and animated by the idea of the great centralized State."

The army, in other words, thought like Rudolf.

The disorders passed; but the System, the root of the evil, remained, and Rudolf's notion for the only remedy hardened into conviction.

> "More and more," he wrote toward the end of 1884, "am I persuaded that serious, perhaps bloody, days are ahead, and that, for a short while or long, the army, as the last champion and bulwark of the state idea, of law and order, will have to intervene to save the bourgeoisie and imperial organization."

These were daring words to commit to paper. As on the Carpathian bear hunts, Rudolf took his life in his hand when he entrusted them to his valet's delivery. Supposing Count Taaffe—he was capable of any ruse, any knavery—secured one of these missives: could he, could Francis Joseph, be in doubt for a moment as to who was to head the army that would strike at the root of the evil, rescue the liberal State, and set up a dictatorship?

Could the Emperor be in doubt for a moment as to who the prospective dictator was? Was a man like Francis Joseph, advised by a man like Taaffe, likely to draw neat distinctions between the harmless grumbling of an ideologue, and high treason and rebellion plotted by a general commanding a division of the imperial army?

X

His mind was like an engine revolving at top speed that on steep grades slipped the gear of reality. He confused thinking and acting; wherefore his thought was not even thought but mere dream. He indulged in the attitudes of the ruthless rationalist; but his very indulgence was the mark of the sentimentalist whose world is lined with mirrors.

The years dragged on. In their wake unhappiness, discontent, frustration. Rudolf dreamed of coming into his heritage—seizing it by force, if there was no other way—and meantime wrote anonymous articles for the *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*. Around him the world changed. The Emperor William, founder of the Holy German Empire of the Prussian nation, was dead; his son Frederick, husband of the Princess Royal of Great Britain, ascended the throne, a sincere liberal: a dying man. Ninety-nine days, and the "mute Emperor" succumbs to his terrible disease. His son succeeds him: William II. A dazzling personality. He does not dazzle Rudolf, though.

> "William II," he writes—the date is August 24, 1888,—"is unfolding himself. Before long he will start an awful confusion in old Europe; he is just that sort of a person. His mind is limited by the grace of God; he is vigorous and stubborn like a bull, regards himself the greatest genius—what

> more do you want? In a few years he will probably land Hohenzollern Germany in the ditch where it belongs. . . ."

XI

His own home is hell.

He cannot bear the sight of his wife. After the birth of a daughter Stephanie undergoes an operation; and Rudolf knows he will never have a son. It is perhaps as well so; for he himself is ill—smitten with an incurable ailment: the iniquity of his fathers is visited upon him. He tries to drown his growing gloom in work, and champagne, and love-making: ever more champagne and love-making, and ever less work. He has mistresses: but that is not a serious matter in Vienna where married men talk about their philanderings as freely as they do about their golf score in America.

He celebrates his thirtieth birthday—but in what a mood!

> "Thirty years mean a great period, if not one to rejoice over; much time is gone, spent more or less usefully, but devoid of real deeds and successes. We live in a tottering, decaying age. Who knows how long things still can drag on? And every year makes me older, less vigorous and less able; for humdrum everyday work, however useful and necessary, slackens creative powers, with this eternal preparation for something that does not happen, this eternal expectancy of great things to come . . ."

He is haunted by forebodings. "I shall never reign—*he* will never give me a chance," he repeats to his sister-in-law Louise of Coburg. One day, in Hungary, he was standing in the hall of a château, surrounded by Magyar

nobles. Suddenly he said, without any preliminary, interrupting the flow of small talk: "It is not I who shall be Emperor of Austria but the one who is coming up there." Astounded, his friends turned around, and beheld, mounting the stairs, the young Archduke Francis Ferdinand. . . .

In November, 1888, he meets the Baroness Vetsera. Mary is seventeen, a ravishing beauty.

> "Her complexion was lovely, her red, voluptuous mouth parted over sharp little white teeth—her eyes deep blue, with curling lashes set off by finely marked eyebrows. Her dark brown hair was very long, she had nice hands and feet, and she walked with a seductive, swaying grace that was irresistible."

Their friendship soon grew into an open scandal. Mary was anything but discreet; she was desperately in love with the Crown Prince, and proud of it; at a party at the German Embassy she insulted the Crown Princess in the sight of Vienna society. The Vetseras were not rich; the old Baroness was a clever woman; she allowed things to take their course; perhaps she hoped for a situation that would drive the Crown Prince to heroic measures.

If so, she was not disappointed. Rudolf may have embarked on an adventure like many others; he did not proceed very far before he discovered that this was a different matter. For the first time in his life he was in love; his love was the deeper and stronger for being without hope; he recognized in it a symbol of his whole life. "I cannot get what I want: what I want I cannot get." Then, at least, to forget everything—everything.

Around them was darkness; the squalls of hostile Fate tossed a frail shell. Rudolf made another, a last, attempt,

to steer a course. He wrote to the Pope—an act of unheard-of daring—and asked for annulment of his marriage by special dispensation. The Pope forwarded his letter to Francis Joseph.

XII

On January 30, 1889, the news burst upon Vienna like thunder that the Crown Prince Rudolf was found dead in his bed in the hunting lodge of Mayerling. With him was found, it soon transpired, the dead body of Mary Vetsera.

Austria, all Europe, staggered in a whirlwind of rumours. One version had it that the Baroness, in a fit of jealousy, blew out Rudolf's brain and then killed herself. According to another, Rudolf's skull was shattered by a champagne bottle swung by Mary's uncle. A third whispered that the Crown Prince had been murdered by masked assassins sent by his father. There were countless others; the subtlest of them all explained that Rudolf and the Baroness had not died together, that there was no causal connection between the two deaths, but a mere coincidence: that Rudolf had invited Mary to a last meeting; a revelry followed; he told her all was over; she went upstairs and took poison; Rudolf, ignorant of her fate, cynical and desperate, went out to spend the night with a gamekeeper's pretty wife; the husband, despatched by Rudolf on an errand, returned in the small hours to confirm his suspicions, smashed the Prince's head with the butt of his gun, and then dragged the corpse outside and left it lying in the snow; it was found and carried upstairs by servants in the morning.

The first official bulletin stated that the Crown Prince had lost his life through a shooting accident. Nobody in Vienna believed it; public indignation forced the Govern-

ment to issue, within twenty-four hours, another communiquè to the effect that Rudolf had committed suicide.

That was believed even less. If—so the sophisticated Viennese argued—the bigots of the Habsburg court admitted suicide—in the Catholic view the unpardonable sin—it was only to screen a truth still worse. So the myths went on flourishing.

They have gone on flourishing ever since. The Crown Prince Rudolf was buried alongside his ancestors in the Capuchin vault of Vienna. The Baroness Vetsera's body was taken in a cab, propped up between her two uncles Count Stockau and Alexander Baltazzi so as to make her seem alive, to the Benedictine abbey of Heiligenkreuz, and interred in the dead of the night by two silent cowled monks. But the curiosity of a mystified world was not laid to rest. It was nurtured by the complete secrecy with which the Austrian court—supreme proof of imperial power in days when emperors were no more believed omnipotent—contrived to surround the truth. No one of those with first-hand knowledge—Rudolf's friends and servants, and the officials in charge of the case—ever uttered a word. No document shedding authentic light on the tragedy of Mayerling has ever been found; there is good reason to assume that none is extant be it not in some sealed recess of the secret archives of the Vatican.

Yet, though the full facts shall probably never be known, it is possible, by careful sifting and piecing together available evidence, and by correlating it with the known character of Rudolf, to reconstruct both the event and its motives with a reasonable claim to intrinsic truth. The two main points of this reconstruction are, first, that Rudolf ended by suicide; second, that his love affair with Baroness Vetsera was not the prime cause of his self-sought death.

It is established that on January 26, 1889, the Crown Prince had an unusually stormy interview with his father who had just received the Pope's communication. It is assumed that the Emperor extracted a pledge from his son that he would renounce the Baroness.

On January 28 Rudolf drove out to his hunting lodge at Mayerling, situated in the wooded hills just beyond the watering place of Baden, at about two hours' distance from the capital. In the course of the day his favourite cabby Bratfisch, executor of many an intimate errand, brought Mary Vetsera, who had slipped away from her mother's palace by a ruse. Two of Rudolf's friends, Prince Philip of Saxe-Coburg and Count Hoyos, also arrived for a shooting party next day; they did not see Mary, though they suspected a woman's presence. Rudolf and the Baroness had supper upstairs. Next morning at seven Rudolf's valet Loschek called his master; receiving no answer to his knocks, he sent for Count Hoyos. They forced the door, and found, in a blood-besplattered room, Rudolf, dead, with his skull shattered to pulp. Covered up with a sheet on the bed lay the body of Mary Vetsera; she, too, had been killed by a shot through the head.

These were the probable circumstances surrounding the certain fact of suicide. On the surface they seem to bear out the popular theory about the conventional tragic ending of an unconventional love affair: that Rudolf and Mary took flight together into death because they could not be united in this world. Yet in the light of up-to-date knowledge it seems assured that Rudolf's decision to destroy himself was not urged by unhappy love; that he had resolved to end his life for quite a different set of reasons, and merely yielded to Mary's entreaties to allow her to die with him.

The Crown Prince Rudolf

(From the portrait in the volume of correspondence with Szeps)

Mayerling

Rudolf killed himself because he was weary of life; because he could not bear being tied to a woman like Stephanie; because he was incurably ill; because he regarded himself as a failure, and felt he was lacking in strength for the battle of existence; because he felt that he would never come into his rightful heritage; because he felt that his father was stronger than he; and because he knew that suicide was by far the worst blow and greatest disgrace that he could inflict on his father. He hurled his dead body before his father's feet as a protest of impotent rage, an act of transcendent hatred and revenge.

To these motives, acting upon and through a physique disorganized by dissipation, may be added another which, together with his thwarted passion for Mary, may have determined the choice of the particular moment. It would seem—absolute proof is out of question—that Rudolf had entangled himself in some sort of political intrigue which he had no strength and no courage to see through, and which now crashed down upon him.

The idea that Rudolf's suicide had a political background has found its strongest exponent in Countess Larisch's celebrated volume of memoirs entitled *My Past*. The Baroness Marie Wallersee was a niece of the Empress Elizabeth, daughter of her brother Duke Louis of Bavaria from a morganatic marriage. As a young girl she became the Empress's confidante, and was employed by her on all kinds of delicate commissions; later, through the Empress's mediation, she married a wealthy nonentity, Count George Larisch. After Rudolf's death Countess Larisch fell in disgrace and was banished from the Austrian court for life. The story circulated that it was she who, in furthering some ambitious design of her own, introduced Rudolf to Mary Vetsera and promoted and shielded their friendship. Her book, written twenty-four

years after the Mayerling tragedy, is her apology against this charge; its effectiveness as such suffers from her trying to prove, in the same breath, two theses that are hopelessly at odds: first, that she was a very important agent in the proceedings, second, that she was absolutely innocent of the results. Still, where her own responsibility and the purity of her own motives are not involved, her account is fairly reliable; and although she lacked all appreciation of the finer points of Rudolf's nature: his quick penetrating intelligence, his enthusiasm for the things of mind and spirit, his genuine love of justice and fair play, she perceived his grosser traits clearly enough: the chaotic, the unrestrained and undecided, in him.

She relates that on January 27—the day before the fatal ride to Mayerling—the Crown Prince, wrapped to the chin in a military greatcoat so as to be unrecognizable, called at her rooms in a Vienna hotel, and begged her to take charge of a small steel box, sewn up in cloth. He pleaded that he was engaged in a dangerous political plot; that the Emperor might order his personal belongings to be seized any moment; and that if the contents of the steel box were known his father would sign his death warrant. He instructed her that should he not return to claim the box she should deliver it to the person who came to her with the password *R.I.U.O.*

Reluctantly, Countess Larisch took the box and hid it. About a fortnight after the catastrophe she received a letter asking her to come that night at half past ten to the corner of the Schwarzenbergplatz and Heugasse. The letter bore the signature *R.I.U.O.* She went, taking the box with her, and was scared out of her wits when a mysterious stranger, wearing a broad-brimmed soft hat and a Styrian mountaineer's rough frieze cloak, accosted her. He muttered the magic letters, and she gave him

the box. Thereupon the stranger uncovered, and she was stupefied to recognize the Archduke John of Tuscany, Rudolf's best friend.

The Archduke told her that Rudolf had died by his own hand; all stories to the contrary were false; and he thanked her for guarding the box so well. If she had surrendered it to the Emperor she would have been made a Duchess instead of being disgraced.

"You have saved my life," the Archduke John said. "Don't regret Rudolf; if the Emperor had found these papers matters would have been infinitely worse. The Crown Prince has killed himself; but had the Emperor known all, it would have been his duty to have had him tried by court-martial, and shot as a traitor."

"Oh my God!" cried the Countess. "What did he do? . . . Was he thinking of the Crown of Hungary?"

The Archduke nodded assent.

But—perhaps he nodded assent merely as the easiest way of evading cross-examination by an inquisitive lady. There is no record anywhere of a plot in Hungary to place Rudolf on the throne—no evidence of any kind, intrinsic or circumstantial, that such a step was ever planned. It is true that Rudolf was popular in Hungary (rather undeservedly from the Magyar point of view, for he was a Josephine centralist, a believer in Greater Austria); —but that is all, and not enough.

No, if Rudolf meditated a *coup d'état*, it was not the crown of Hungary he was thinking of, but a bigger prize.

The evidence lies in his correspondence with Moriz Szeps. Over and over again he reverts to the idea of a military dictatorship. Over and over again he emphasizes that the army thinks with him, feels with him, is with him. Over and over again he declares that in the intervention of the army lies the last hope of the Austrian state.

His last hope, too.

He confused thinking and acting; a thought thought was to him as good as a deed done; wherefore his thought was not even thought but mere dream.

The full truth will never be known. It lies buried—perhaps—in the bottomless mud of the Atlantic bottom off the coast of South America.

For John of Tuscany, also known by the name of John Orth, went down with his ship on a stormy night off the River Plate, and with him went down the steel box of Rudolf—if it ever existed.

But then, again—perhaps it still exists somewhere.

XIII

When the news of his son's suicide was brought to him, the Emperor Francis Joseph exclaimed:

"He died like a tailor!"

He thought of his honour.

CHAPTER XX

TWILIGHT

I

THOSE who knew both Francis Joseph and Taaffe regarded the Emperor's affection for his Premier as somewhat of an enigma. Not only were the two totally different in character and disposition, but the Viennese-Irishman's very manners, his flippancy, his irreverent treatment of the weightiest issues, should have been repulsive to the imperial pedant who might see the fun of a joke, but would never admit the funny aspect of serious matters. And there was nothing in the world that Count Taaffe took quite seriously.

The secret of Taaffe's duration—the Crown Prince Rudolf had called it "tapeworm-like toughness"—was that he understood better than any of his predecessors—and successors, for that matter—how to reduce every question of government to the consistency which was most easily digested by Francis Joseph: to a document which could be docketed, annotated, disposed of, and filed. After all the doctrinaire wrangling of the German Liberal leaders Taaffe brought to Francis Joseph, fifty-five, the same relief as the Adjutant-General Grünne once had offered to the youth exhausted by the philosophic discourses of Kübeck and the legalistic drouth of Bach: the relief of coarse anti-intellectual concreteness.

He sat at his desk from five in the morning till eight in the evening, expediting documents. Such had been

the governmental method of Philip II of Spain, and, more or less, of all Habsburg rulers since, in kind if not degree; a method that may have wearied the spirit, but also deflected it from worry, *negotia pro solatiis accipiens.*[1] Yet this colossal activity, with all his vast store of experience accumulated in the course of decades, remained, unto the last, the mere absolution of a daily theme or stint. A comprehensive, long-range study of single issues, with reference to material not contained in the day's entries, never took place; all effort was concentrated on the despatch of items submitted by the Private Cabinet Bureau in neat portfolios.

State problems were not admitted; only state papers. The Emperor's eulogists made much of his habit of discussing any subject only with the minister in charge of the respective department, and no one else: they attributed it to his "constitutional correctness." In reality it was the formal punctilio of the bureaucrat and the lack of correlating thought—of imagination. Thus Francis Joseph never realized the anomaly of basing his foreign policy on alliance with Germany, and his domestic administration on the suppression of Austrian Germans, because the German alliance, an expedient dictated by fear of Russia, was handled by the Foreign Office, and the anti-German course at home, prescribed by the Emperor's distaste for German liberals and his distrust of the *Grossdeutsch* movement, was handled by the Departments of Interior and Education respectively. The two matters belonged under different departments: that was the point. Different bundles of documents, differently numbered, reported by different officials, kept in different drawers of desk and mind. Sufficient unto each batch of papers was the evil thereof.

[1] Tacitus, *Annales*, IV, 13.

From his wide, plain, substantial mahogany desk rustled paper—decrees, appointments, grants, refusals, queries, reprimands, acknowledgments, felicitations, whatnot—endless stream of paper conveyed through the intricate channels of bureaucracy to the farthest corners of the Empire. He read every report—and their name was legion—submitted by the various ministers, and jotted down marginal notes. When he did not draw up dispositions himself, he meticulously corrected the drafts submitted by secretaries—struck out a sentence or a word or a single letter, altered a pronoun or a punctuation mark.

Nor did he rely exclusively on departmental reports: he eked out their intelligence by careful reading of the newspapers. He liked to surprise his ministers—a vicarious latter-day Haroun al Rashid—by sending them memoranda built on this pattern: "I see by the papers that . . . Is this true? Please submit particulars." Nothing escaped his attention, nothing was excluded from the scope of a conscientious ruler. Whether it was a big bank that failed in Vienna, a river that broke its dam in a remote corner of Bukovina, a peasant woman that gave birth to triplets in Transylvania, or a youthful member of the nobility that departed for unknown parts leaving substantial gambling debts at Budapest: Francis Joseph knew all, wanted to know more, and demanded what he could do about it.

On his desk every morning a fine white foolscap was spread, thumbtacked to a large blotting pad. It bore in careful secretarial long-hand a detailed schedule of the day, divided in quarter-hours. Francis Joseph adhered to this time-table with an accuracy that put the Imperial Austrian State Railways to shame. Beside the governmental business of the day this schedule recorded all

the birthdays, name-days, engagements, weddings, births, christenings, anniversaries, and deaths, that occurred that day among European royalty and the high nobility of the Empire. There were also reminders that this or that duke, minister, or general, was ill: an inquiry had to be wired. There was, of course, a list of the audiences, and one of the letters to be written.

Francis Joseph corrected and annotated this calendar in his own hand. Whenever a personal communication to royalty had to be drafted he would indicate whether it should be in second person singular, the intimate "thou" of German and French, or in the formal "you." He always put down the address himself, in full, without abbreviations, without entrusting anything to the hazards of secretarial judgment. If in a given case he used a shorter title—his own, or that of the addressee—instead of a full one: there was a reason. It had its deep meaning whether a dispatch was headed, "The Emperor and King to Prince So-and-So," or, "His Majesty the Emperor and King to His Serene Highness the Prince This-or-That." Francis Joseph played the gamut of titles as a master organist plays his multiple keyboard. A pedantry of manifold symbolism: he did these things himself because he liked to do things that he could do better than any other mortal; to him the obvious tangibilities represented reality, not the hidden essences; above all: he felt, rightly, that a religiously strict observance of the externals of hierarchy was one of the bulwarks of his own grandeur.

He never shook hands with anybody except royalty and members of the highest nobility: princes, and a few counts of particularly ancient lineage. Baron Margutti, who, son of a civil servant of bourgeois ante-

The Emperor Francis Joseph I

From a portrait by Casimir Pochwalski and Wilhelm Hecht

The Archduchess Stephanie as a Widow, with Her Daughter, the Archduchess Elizabeth

cedents, was his aide-de-camp through sixteen years and was in attendance daily, records that in those sixteen years Francis Joseph shook hands with him once—when he thanked him for his promotion to Major-General. Next day the Adjutant-General, Count Paar, congratulated him on the great honour of having had a "shake" with His Majesty. "How do you know?" asked Margutti, taken aback. "The Emperor has told me," Paar confided.

II

He submitted to the outward forms of constitutionalism when he could not resist any longer; its spirit he never understood, and always hated, even in its emasculated form obtaining both in Austria and Hungary, where private bills were not allowed, and government bills could be submitted only with his previous approval; a practice debasing legislative assemblies into the ruler's rubber stamps. The fundamental principle of parliamentary government: that the ministry represents the majority's will, he never recognized. When Taaffe's cabinet began to totter under the weight of its sins, a suggestion came forward in a Crown Council that a coalition government should be formed with inclusion of the German Liberals. The Emperor objected, whereupon one of the ministers, Count Falkenhayn, remarked that Taaffe, too, was supported by a coalition.

"Oh, I don't mind *that* sort of coalition government," said the Emperor. "It is not a parliamentary cabinet, but the Emperor's own ministry."

He held that a member of the Government had no right to express political opinions in public. Once he directed the Hungarian Premier to reprimand the lib-

eral minister of education, Trefort, for fighting a newspaper polemic with a bishop. "What are we coming to if every minister will broadcast his political opinions to the world?" this most constitutional of monarchs indignantly demanded.

Like his grandfather Francis, he took intense interest in police matters. In his youth he had attempted to smother the Italian risorgimento by prohibiting meetings and locking up agitators; Solferino, and the lessons of half a century, taught him nothing; at the age of sixty he still believed, as at twenty, that political movements were instigated by a few wicked individuals, and in the nineties he was employing against the Jugoslav national awakening the same methods, only tempered by the new fear of publicity, as had so signally failed in Lombardy.

His chief concern was the prevention of street demonstrations. Suppressing the celebration of the Lessing centenary was to him equivalent to aiming a blow at aspirations for German unity; muzzling the Serb and Croat residents of Vienna who meant to raise cheers at a reception of the Queen of Serbia was the same as restraining Jugoslav irredentism; a street riot quelled was a phase of discontent eliminated. This purely superficial conception of law and order was that of the police sergeant, not the statesman. Taaffe, too clever not to know better, too lazy and unscrupulous to say that he did, encouraged him, and was rewarded with the longest tenure of premiership in Austrian history.

III

The myth that grew up around her dark slender figure, never at rest, emerging now at this end of

Europe, now at the other, dressed in mourning, with the inevitable black fan shielding her face against photographers and sightseers, called her the unhappiest of women, and perhaps in this point the myth touched upon truth. It missed the mark by a wide enough margin when, recreating the wandering Empress in the image of myriads of wistful *bourgeoises,* discouraged Noras wasting away in their untidy dolls' houses, it conceived her unhappiness as soft and languishing and sentimental. She had left her imperial home a rebel, not a dreamer; and the suffering which burned in her Wittelsbach veins and with deadly efficiency went on creating its own premises, made Elizabeth a hard woman. Her sadness was the sadness of marble.

Her aimless flight took her from Madeira to Smyrna, from the coast of Normandy to Egypt—but always away from Vienna, from Schönbrunn, from Ischl. Home meant, to her, a stay a little longer than at a chance hotel in her villa Achilleion on Corfu, whence her eyes could sweep the purple sea once cleft by the prow of another royal wanderer: Ulysses. Tall cypresses guarded the statue of Heine, her favourite poet (the middle-class females dreaming their stuffy identity into Elizabeth not the woman but the myth, saw in him the sweet bard of grieved love, and forgot that he had been the bitterest republican, the most cynical agnostic: far it was from Elizabeth to forget). Her love of Heine, like her preference for Magyars, was a cloaked yet savage challenge of her husband; in less personal moods her tastes were much tamer: she cherished Longfellow. It was no accident that her favourites among living men were, with one or two exceptions, all Magyar magnates: sons of a race that caused Francis Joseph more trouble than all the others taken together.

She learned their language, the most difficult in Europe; she supported their political aspirations; while she made her sojourns in Austria as short and infrequent as she could, she ostentatiously enjoyed her visits to Hungary.

Another reason why the Austrian aristocracy should dislike her; and dislike her it did. In the latter half of the nineteenth century gossip was, beside shooting hares, the only standard occupation of the Austrian nobility which, as a class, unlike the Hungarian or the British, never engaged in public affairs and kept aloof even from the army. One of its principal targets was the Empress; and Elizabeth accommodated them by her careless disdain of appearances. To Madeira she had been accompanied by the dashing young Count Emery Hunyady; in Hungary Count Nicholas Esterhazy was one of her satellites; Count Elemer Batthyány, said to be the handsomest man in Europe, was another. His birth surrounded him with a melancholy halo: his father had been the first Premier of Hungary who died a martyr's death before Francis Joseph's firing squad in '49; and it is related that the son persistently "cut" the Emperor whenever they met; one of the most powerful of Hungarian magnates, he could afford such luxuries.

Her greatest friendship, however, was with the "*beau pendu*," Count Julius Andrassy, him of the fiery moustache and coal-black curls, one time rebel, now His Majesty's (her husband's) minister, who, in the anxious days of the Compromise in '67, called her "Hungary's beautiful Providence," and sent all his servants on a holiday, doing all the housework himself, whenever the Empress, in the deepest incognito, visited his little chalet in the sun-blessed, wine-blessed hills of Tokay.

Beside travelling her grand passion was for the

hunt. One of the best horsewomen in Europe, she was not content with the sport offered by her own domains, and made frequent pilgrimages to the great immemorial shrines of the fox-hunting religion in Northamptonshire, Cheshire and Ireland. Her cavalier on these occasions was a gallant and witty Scot, Captain Middleton, himself one of the celebrated heroes of the chase, repeatedly her guest in Hungary and elsewhere. His friends called him "Bay" Middleton, on account of the colour of his hair; his other nickname was reserved for use in his absence: "William Tell," a reference not to his marksmanship, but a pun on his most un-Scottish lack of secretiveness.

She was a prisoner of her fate, free on parole; and she enjoyed her freedom. Francis Joseph, her husband, was not her mate, but the warden of her prison; yet, for a warden, he behaved like a gentleman. Love, passion, understanding, he could not give her; he had none of these; but he lavished on her courtesy, and attention, and money. His politeness knew no relaxation; he never failed to meet even the most casual of Elizabeth's wishes inasmuch as they involved a claim on his purse. She only had to hint, and fulfilment, as he usually took pains to say, "went without saying." Usually, too, they were rather expensive wishes. Still, expense was the least of Francis Joseph's marital worries. How he hated her un-imperial, unconventional, erratic, sometimes outright scandalous ways—her constant flitting about, her keeping company in the unlikeliest places with dirty fat unkempt Levantines who gave her instruction in modern Greek—the idea! She travelled incognito—signed in hotel registers almost any name that occurred to her. "Countess Hohenembs"—all right, one could stand for that—"Count of Hohen-

embs" was one of the smallest of the minor titles of the Emperor of Austria, tucked away somewhere toward the tail end of the endless list; still, it was at least legitimate. But "Mrs. Megaliotis"—whew! He bore his fate without murmur, and footed the bill.

His telegrams followed her around the world—polite inquiries concerning her health, and polite information concerning the weather. Once in a great while even—supreme condescension!—Francis Joseph paid her a visit in her own realm of poetry. A most cursory visit—but still. She was at Miramar. He telegraphed her: "Have arrived at Landstreu without mishap in delightful weather my thoughts dwell with you and accompany you on the blue sea stop." On that particular morning Francis Joseph's schedule, drawn up by his secretariat, must have contained an entry, "9.45, poetic message to Empress." The foolscap, unfortunately, has not been preserved; but the draft of the telegram, in Francis Joseph's own hand, lies embalmed, together with other state papers, in the Austrian State Archives.

IV

After rebellious years ("What would you expect from Francis Joseph? He is only a sergeant!" she once exclaimed) she resigned herself to a fate which provided her with every facility of unconstrained luxurious melancholia, and even forbore—on short visits home, far between—with her husband. She eased her task by finding for him a friend. It was Elizabeth who introduced to the Emperor the Viennese actress, Madame Catherine Schratt.

She was everything that Elizabeth was not—a woman after the heart of Francis Joseph. Jolly, buxom, witty, untroubled by depths—an ordinary human being who had

her feet on the ground and her heart in the right place, and in her comfortable villa at Hietzing a first-rate Viennese cook, and no statues of Heine. She was clever without being intellectual, gentle and genteel without affectation—a lady and a *Wienerin* to the tips of her fingers, instinct with that celebrated *Gemütlichkeit* which is a blend of humour and sentiment, flavoured with a dash of music, and poured over with a sauce of bourgeois good sense. She gave Francis Joseph that which no one else could give him, and which he needed more than anything else: a chance to doff the robes of Cæsarean majesty, and be himself without a capital H—just a good substantial Viennese middle class householder. He called on her every day as far as possible, both at Schönbrunn and at Ischl, where her villa lay just outside the Imperial demesne, and spent a cozy hour over good plain Viennese food, listening to the latest Viennese gossip, and reading the latest reports of the secret police.

Elizabeth fostered the friendship—it relieved her of a large part of her slender responsibility. When she stayed at home (not at Schönbrunn, but at the Hermes Villa at Lainz, nearby), she invited Francis Joseph and Mme. Schratt to luncheon *à trois*.

When the Emperor was away, whether shooting chamois in Tyrol or meeting the Czar in Silesia, he telegraphed to the actress daily; and when she went on one of her walking tours in the Alps and her exact address was uncertain, he sent his telegrams by way of the general delivery window. Francis Joseph drew up these messages in his own hand, like those for his wife; and sometimes he wrote out telegrams for both on the same sheet, thrifty bureaucrat that he was, dividing the two compartments of his emotional household by a neat pencil line. He would tell the Empress, at Corfu, that he arrived at Budapest,

weather very beautiful and cold; but he would inquire from the actress how *she* felt. And sometimes he would sign his messages to his lady-friend as Megaliotis. Why not? The husband of Mrs. Megaliotis was Mr. Megaliotis. So there. It was his revenge.

V

The days when her hunter, after a frantic *ventre à terre* across mist-drenched fields of Meath, jumped a low wall and landed her on a lawn in a group of scared and delighted young clerics at Maynooth, sank softly into the violet distances of the past. She was afraid of horses now; afraid of water; afraid of the sun; above all, afraid of her mirror. For her greatest enemy had conquered. Elizabeth was old.

The famous black fan was reinforced by several thicknesses of black lace veil—nobody shall see this once lovely face wrinkled and sere! Of her youthful beauty her majestic slender figure lingered longest: she paid blackmail to it in a frenzied succession of ascetic *régimes*. Then came the day when she cared no more. She began to put on weight. Hoisted the flag of surrender.

It had been her son's tragic death that broke her. Contrary to the legend, she and Rudolf had not had much affection for each other; he had been brought up a stranger by strangers; he was irreverent, passionate, sullen, unreliable—rather like herself, in a masculine, violent edition. In her heart Elizabeth was afraid of him. Still he was her son; and in the horrors of that night at Mayerling Elizabeth read a sign. Fate went out of its way to crush her. It was all over now. She bore up under the blow when it fell: it was she who, with head erect, a figure of adamantine sorrow, broke the news to Francis Joseph—no one else dared. But afterward——

The Empress Elizabeth

After a portrait in the possession of the late Emperor Francis Joseph

The Three Emperors' Meeting at Skierniewice, Poland, Sept. 4, 1884

The three figures at extreme left: Czar Alexander III, Emperor William I and Francis Joseph, all in Russian uniforms

Her wanderings had seemed aimless and erratic before; now they dissolved into a wild incalculable rout as of a beaten and frightened army. She was incapable of staying in any place; during brief stopovers at this villa or that she had her bed laid in a different room every night. One after another she gave up all her old amusements, pastimes, fads; walking remained her only exercise, and her walk, with her fan and queer tilted parasol and heavy veils, with her quick short steps and nervous avoidance of glances, was a flight.

On September 10, 1898, she was about to board an excursion steamer in front of the Hotel Beau Rivage at Geneva when a young man dashed at her and lunged some sharp weapon into her breast. She staggered, but pulled herself together, and stepped on the deck. Here she fainted; the steamer, which had already pushed off, was made fast again, and she was carried back to the hotel on an improvised stretcher. By the time she arrived in the hall she was dead.

With such lightning speed did the assassin do his work that the Countess Sztaray, who accompanied the Empress, did not know that she had been wounded, and thought the man had merely struck her. On her body no wound was visible—only two tiny drops of blood. Yet Luccheni's file had gone clear through her heart. Death was more merciful to her than life had been: she did not know that she had been stabbed, and breathed her last without pain.

VI

He was sixty-eight, and had reigned just half a century: the news of the assassination interrupted arrangements for the jubilee. He might have been father to many of his ministers and generals, and grandfather to

the vast majority of his subjects. Indeed, sentimental legend (the Viennese are always sentimental when they are not scurrilous) pictured him as a kindly old grandfather, consisting chiefly of white whiskers, a general's red trouser stripe, and a smile.

The sentimental legend, semi-officially nursed, drew the curtain of oblivion across not inessential features of the past. Crowned executioner, he had been called in Lombardy, and not only in Lombardy. Two thousand death warrants signed in three years. Kremsier parliament chased to the winds by grenadiers. Constitution of March revoked. The unspeakable brutalities of Haynau and Kempen. But the men who had gnashed their teeth and clenched their fists in the fifties were now dead; their children did not remember; and their children's children were growing up. The *blutjung* Emperor (with accent on the *blut*) was now an old man bent by misfortune.

"The dear old kind gentleman in Schönbrunn." (That was one of his current characters. Another was Prochaska. A Czech footman with white side whiskers who was his double, and who earned a luxurious living by relieving him of the necessity of appearing in person at minor representative occasions such as the dedication of some provincial Academy of Sciences. All Vienna, well knowing that Prochaska did not exist, believed in and talked of him.) The dear old kind gentleman in Schönbrunn spent his days in the service of his peoples, seeking solace in work. No one in the Empire rose so early; no one toiled so hard; no one led a simpler life. He sat at his desk at four in summer, five in winter; breakfasted on a glass of milk and two rolls. By ten o'clock, when the average official, professional or business man just made up his mind to settle down to work in earnest,

Francis Joseph had already cleared the entire file of the day. He lunched off a tray—one meat dish with a vegetable, and a glass of beer. He worked till eight, and then went to bed. And what a bed! A plain iron folding bedstead like that of a private soldier in the barracks. In each of his palaces—at the Hofburg, in Schönbrunn, Budapest, Ischl, Laxenburg, Gödöllö, he had one.

That iron bedstead formed the core of a special myth, like Arthur's sword Excalibur. It was supreme proof of the Emperor's simple tastes. He might have slept on a bed of solid gold studded with rubies, on sheets of pure velvet and satin pillows stuffed with fresh rose petals daily. And he chose the couch of a conscript. In the midst of Imperial grandeur he felt a mere man. That bed was the symbol of his Christian humility.

No one had ever seen that bed. It was taken on faith by fifty million people. And when children in lower middle class households clamoured for butter at breakfast, their thrifty sires would silence them by announcing that the Emperor did not get any butter either.

Those facts of the legend were strictly true.

True were the two unbuttered rolls for breakfast. What the loyal subjects did not know was that those two rolls were fetched, every morning at half past three, by a coachman and a flunkey in fawn-and-silver court livery and cocked hats, who drove in from Schönbrunn, in a carriage with gilt spokes and the double-headed eagle emblazoned on the door, drawn by two prodigious bays, to Roman Uhl's bakery in the Singerstrasse, mid-town, bought the rolls, and drove back again. Two men, two horses, and a court carriage had to be mobilized every day in the year to get those two rolls, unbuttered.

The Spartan bedstead was true, too. It stood in the Emperor's bedroom in every one of his palaces, covered

with a plain dark red woollen blanket. It was equipped with an eight-inch first class horsehair mattress and a heavy box spring of the most modern and effective design. But, while everybody in the Empire heard about the cheap iron bed, nobody ever heard of the luxurious mattress and the box spring. They were discovered by an American after the collapse of the Empire.

What made the two rolls and the plain iron bedstead symbols of the first importance was the fact that Francis Joseph himself believed in them. Those dodges were devised not for the benefit of the masses but for his own. He did not know how those two rolls were procured; he could not possibly be bothered with such details. And he never saw that box spring. He never had issued orders that it should be installed. Nobody ever mentioned it to him. And what was not spoken of did not exist.

Probably the various phases of the Francis Joseph myth, as is the way of religious tradition and rite, had had their origin in plain, utilitarian, rationalized practices. Probably in his youth he had decided that the early morning hours were best for work, and later the habit was stronger than himself, and still later he simply could not sleep. Probably in his youth the plain iron bedstead was what it seemed, and the box spring was fitted in for the old man by some anxious and considerate functionary. But with the passing of years these antecedents waned, and the myth precipitated.

He was mediocre, and he knew it. His majestic trappings, his aloofness, his solitude, may have deceived his subjects; they did their best to deceive him; but they did not deceive him completely. He never tolerated genius among his advisers: he refused to be surpassed. He yearned for distinction, and captured it by his extraordinary industry, his marvellous devotion to the task

in hand, his Spartan mode of living. He wished to be ahead of all his subjects in some respect at least; so he got up ahead of them in the morning.

What a handicap those unearthly hours of his inflicted upon his ministers and generals! They had gone to bed like other men, and were now choking with sleep. *He* had slept his eight hours, and was rosy and serene and fit as a fiddle. He had all his advisers at a disadvantage.

He began each day by placing his whole Empire in the wrong.

VII

His misfortunes surrounded him with the halo of a martyr. One after the other the members of his family were snatched away by violent and terrible deaths. His brother was executed; his son a suicide; his wife assassinated. His sister-in-law the Duchess of Alençon perished in the famous bazaar fire at Paris; the Archduchess Hedvig, daughter of Archduke Albrecht, burnt to death by upsetting a candle while dressing; the Archduke William was killed by a fall from his horse; the Archduke Ladislas by his own shotgun going off; the Archduke John disappeared in a South Atlantic storm. The legend recalled the curse uttered by that Countess Karolyi who was the sister-in-law of Count Louis Batthyány the Hungarian Premier shot by Francis Joseph's orders in '49. She invoked the vengeance of heaven and hell for the blood innocently spilled: "May he be smitten in those whom he loves best, in his children, in all his kin!" After each successive disaster people wondered if the measure was full at last; and spoke in subdued tones of the imperial Job sitting in his solitary chamber amid the splendours of his palace, bowing his head before the inscrutable will of God.

He was smitten in those whom he loved best. But two days after the death of Rudolf he was at his desk at five in the morning, signing state papers as usual. When they broke to him the news from Geneva, he exclaimed: "No one knows how I loved this woman! Verily, I am spared no blow." Doubtless he loved her, in his fashion; yet he went on with the routine of his day's work.

"Duty," says Meredith, "is a fine heroic thing: but a free man is a slave to nothing." Francis Joseph's superhuman devotion to his self-appointed duty was another name for his lack of inner freedom. Incapable of the release of true grief, he pulled tight the folds of Stoic insensibility, lashed himself to his desk, and braved the wrath of Destiny. His strength derived from the deadly adequacy of shrewd mediocrity cognizant of its own limitations, not from greatness of soul.

Each of those three deaths—Maximilian's, Rudolf's, Elizabeth's—relieved him of an embarrassment.

CHAPTER XXI

THE SURVIVOR

I

Like his grandfather, he believed that he was fighting bad subjects and quelling local troubles. He did not see that all his problems were but different facets of one fundamental issue. He did not realize that in taking over his grandfather's heritage, and in moulding his methods of government, half-consciously, along his grandfather's pattern, he also assumed, over and above particular difficulties, the liability that lay at the bottom and towered over all: the Sisyphean burden of stemming the French Revolution. In 1900, as in 1800, Habsburg was still fighting the French Revolution. It had been the French Revolution that conquered at Solferino and Königgrätz; it had been the spirit unloosed by the great Napoleon that crushed at Sedan the little Napoleon turned warden of the legitimist *status quo*. Everywhere in the European West the triumph of the French Revolution was not merely complete but becoming archaic: new conflicts raged, new battles loomed; in the Southeast the national upheavals of the Czechs, the Jugoslavs, the Magyars were but stragglers of the rearguard of revolutionary ideas cut off from the main army by the Congress of Vienna, isolated but not sterilized by the successive systems of Metternich, Bach, Schmerling, Taaffe, now nurtured to aggressive vitality by half a century of

peaceful economic growth. The greatest testimony to Habsburg's power lies in the fact that for a hundred years it succeeded in retarding the inevitable. But the moment was rapidly approaching when the question, asked by the peoples everywhere in the wake of the *Grande Armée*, "Will you let us determine our own destinies in our own way?" could not any longer be referred to the police.

The cunning of the idea bent on its own realization turns its very enemies into tools. The very mechanism which Francis Joseph and his artificers of '67 contrived to check the advance of nationalism expressed the thing it was intended to deny. The dualistic partnership of Germans and Magyars was the political idiom in which the momentary stage of the forces released by the French Revolution, the forces of nationalistic bourgeois democracy, interpreted itself. The only justification of German-Magyar hegemony, totally unwarranted by numbers, was the fact that alone of the races ruled by Habsburg the Germans and Magyars possessed a fully articulated social structure.

But this very fact was pregnant with the germ of its own destruction. For it meant that Dualism was to topple over in the moment when the social-economic articulation of the subject races—Czechs, Jugoslavs and Roumanians—had become, if not complete, at least adequate. It was the inherent tragedy of Austria-Hungary that it was a school of economic and social training from which the pupils, the subject races, graduated by smashing up the building.

The utter futility of the Taaffean régime of makeshifts—and that régime, indeed, was but a caricature of *all* Austrian government since 1804—lay in this: that the troubles of Austria could not be cured because one trouble cured loosened three new troubles; that each

Austrian and Hungarian problem had, in the words of one of the finest of Austrian statesmen, the nature of the Lernæan Hydra. The endless chain of grievances pleaded by the oppressed nations were but symptoms of a deep-seated striving for self-determination which knew no limit but that drawn by overwhelming hostile force. Every nationality, even the very smallest, was propelled by the ineradicable desire, dictated by the necessities of its economic and cultural existence, to fight its way to a complete political and social structure. In each the tendency to national statehood was virtually inherent.

By the end of the century the evolution was all but consummated. Czech and German fought each other with unexampled ferocity on the floor of the Imperial Parliament, in the Bohemian diet, in the municipal council of every Bohemian town of mixed population, a bitter internecine war fought with political, economic, cultural methods, sometimes with cudgels and beer bottles —with every conceivable weapon save firearms. And the Germans were pressed into the defensive all along the line: spiritually they were retreating into the hope of ultimate union with the Reich. In Hungary the splendid economic and cultural progress of the Roumanians of Transylvania, achieved by cooperative action in the face of the most brutal despotism, was worrying the Magyar politicians out of their wits, while at the same time the Magyar working classes, never included by the oligarchy in the concept of the Magyar nation, were anxiously inquiring into the growth of a Magyar supremacy which to them meant the supremacy of the gendarme's jackboot.

Most menacing of all, however, was the movement of the South Slavs toward national unity: most menacing, because the gravest mistakes and worst injustices had been committed against them, because they occupied a

strategic position as guards of the Monarchy's southern frontier, and because they possessed, in the independent Serbian kingdom, a Piedmont, and, in Russia, a patron far more powerful and dangerous than Napoleon III had ever been.

Toward 1900 people everywhere in Austria-Hungary discussed the impending dissolution of the Monarchy. Fearfully, hopefully, as the case might be, they predicted that with the old Emperor's death—and he could not live forever, could he?—the Empire would fall to pieces.

II

The north side of the quadrangle which forms the main court of the huge complex of the Hofburg is called Reichskanzlertrakt. Here, on the *bel étage*, facing south toward the statue of a Roman imperator who on closer inspection turns out to be only the Emperor Francis, is situated the suite of a dozen or so rooms that was inhabited by the Emperor Francis Joseph for over half a century. One of these high-roofed cheerless halls was the *Conferenzsaal* where the councils of state sat. Like all rooms reserved for the Emperor's personal use it was furnished with utmost simplicity of design though in excellent materials: heavy dark red brocade and mahogany and palisander wood. A longish table, about a dozen chairs, a tall bureau at the window, an upholstered settee along the wall—that was all. An open English fireplace in the corner is a distinguishing feature: the other rooms are equipped with huge china stoves, fired from the outside, veritable rococo dreadnoughts in white and gold.

The walls, as in the other rooms, are adorned by paintings representing scenes from Austrian history. One of them is called "Arrival of the Dampierre Cuirassiers," by l'Allemand.

A gloomy painting in the heavy green-brown indoor tones of the mid-century academician. A forceful painting, though. Something in the aspect of the dark-armoured cavalry halting in a courtyard is suggestive of latent strength, of dramatic tension, of something momentous happening or about to happen. There seems to be more behind that picture than in it.

The courtyard is the Schweizerhof—smallest and oldest of the enclosed spaces of the Hofburg, bounded by the oldest wing of the palace, the Schweizertrakt. It is identified by the initials and coat-of-arms of the Emperor Ferdinand. A troop of cuirassiers, in black plate armour and visored helmets, have just arrived, and are reining in their splendid horses, whose taut limbs stemmed against the flags quiver with the tremendous effort of sudden halting after a savage gallop. Bugles are blown. Above, windows fly open and figures lean out. They hail the troopers. An officer in the centre salutes them with uplifted carbine. These cuirassiers must have arrived in the nick of time to avert a calamity.

In another of the Imperial palaces of Vienna, the Belvedere, once the home of Prince Eugene, there used to be another picture which might be called the reverse side of Dampierre's cuirassiers. It reveals what was going on in the hall above whose windows burst open with such elemental relief. The story it tells is the story of a miracle.

In the foreground stands a man, of princely mien and attire, tall, with pointed blond beard. He leans against a table, surrounded by other tall men, of dark garb and darker faces. On the table, to the prince's right, an open scroll: one of the dark men points at it with commanding gesture. Another thrusts a pen toward the prince, who raises his right arm in protest, as if to hold back his assail-

ants. He defies them. He says, "No, never!" Behind him, on the table, a tall silver crucifix.

But hark! what sounds are these? The clatter of hoofs, afar, nearer, now the metallic tattoo on the pavement of the court—the rattling and clanking of arms. The two men facing the prince are too intent on subduing him to pay any attention. But a third is already glancing anxiously toward the window. An expression of puzzlement yields to terror. A confused low murmur—suddenly swelling to the skies like the sea—the dark men in the background lift their palms to their ears to hear better—now one dives for the window—blast of a bugle—shrill command: "Dis-mooount!" All this takes a bare few seconds. The man at the window turns back and yells: "Run—the cuirassiers are here!" There is a crush at the doors. The prince's men throng to the windows and hail the liberators.

On the eleventh day of June, in the year 1619, a band of Bohemian nobles and Viennese burghers, Protestants all, stormed the Hofburg and took the Emperor Ferdinand II prisoner. Under dire threats they demanded that he should sign a bill granting equal rights of worship to confessors of the new religion. The Emperor refused. In his distress, as his tormentors were about to lay hands on him, he murmured a prayer to the crucifix behind him. The leader of the insurgents barked: "Give in, Ferdy!" But the Christ on the cross bent forward and whispered into the Emperor's ears: "Don't!" Again the Emperor refused. All seemed lost—then a clatter of hoofs and clanking of sabres and triumphant shriek of a bugle—"The cuirassiers are here!"

The timely appearance of a troop of the Dampierre Cuirassier Regiment, under the Captain Gilbert Saint-hélier, rescued the Emperor Ferdinand from the hands

of the rebels. The Protestants of Austria did not obtain their charter. The Jesuits triumphed. Followed the War of Thirty Years. Historic evolution was set back by a century or two. From the ruins of their culture and prosperity the German peoples emerged as barbarians and paupers among the nations of Europe.

Throughout his life Francis Joseph was surrounded by malcontents, like his ancestor Ferdinand in Wurzinger's painting. They constantly demanded things from him—more rights and fewer duties. The Slavs demanded a federal constitution. The Germans demanded a centralist constitution. The Magyars demanded independence. The Czechs demanded whatever the Magyars demanded. The Italians demanded that the Slovenes should be abolished. The Slovenes demanded that the Italians should be abolished. The Croats demanded freedom from Hungary. The Magyars demanded freedom to wipe out the Croats. They all demanded things impossible in themselves, twice impossible together. There he stood, Francis Joseph, heir to Charlemagne, to Charles V and Ferdinand II, surrounded by the spokesmen of insatiable rebels—parliamentary ministers and politicians and suchlike rabble. He was pressed by disloyalists from all sides. But at the back of his mind there mounted guard, staunch and deathless, a troop of the Walloon cuirassiers of Dampierre, led by the gallant Captain Gilbert Sainthélier. Those cuirassiers once had just arrived to save his ancestor from disgraceful surrender. They would arrive again when *he* needed them.

Francis Joseph hung that painting by l'Allemand on the wall of his council room, to remind himself, but also his counsellors, that God sometimes wrought miracles. Whatever happened, that painting proclaimed, the Army was behind its Emperor. "*Sic semper rebellibus!*"

might have been a fitting inscription upon that canvas.

In the Hungarian elections of 1905 the Liberals, the party adhering to Deák's tradition of cooperation with the monarch, since '67 the governmental majority, was routed by the coalition of opposition parties with slogans of frenzied Magyar jingoism, and Francis Kossuth, tepid son of the fiery dictator of '49, was swept into power. The Emperor, fulfilling the letter of a constitutional monarch's duty, appointed a Cabinet from the rank of the victors and summoned them to audience. For five minutes the Magyar leaders, among them the son of that Kossuth who had deposed him in '49, stood at attention in the Conferenzsaal, facing the Cuirassiers of Dampierre. The Emperor announced his terms: he would never surrender the unity of the army and his unlimited prerogative of command; and he demanded introduction of universal equal suffrage with secret ballot. The Emperor clicked his heels. Dismissed.

The Magyar leaders returned to Budapest, burning with indignation. They could not yield in the military question, for the promise of Magyarizing the Hungarian half of the army was their principal stock-in-trade. And universal suffrage would have brought death to a Magyar supremacy resting on cleverly doctored electoral laws and gerrymandered constituencies.[1] A deadlock ensued, until February 19, 1906, history once more repeated itself. A battalion of infantry entered Parliament, and Colonel Fabricius read a writ of dissolution. The deputies went home. Once more, as at Kremsier fifty-seven years earlier, Francis Joseph appealed to the cuirassiers of Dampierre.

Contrary to the vociferous forecasts of the Magyar

[1] The prevailing Hungarian suffrage resulted in 51 per cent. of the population —all the non-Magyar races—obtaining *four or five* of the 413 seats in Parliament.

augurs, the skies did not collapse. Followed a brief experiment in avowedly autocratic government; but once more Francis Joseph contented himself with half-measures: instead of proclaiming universal suffrage by royal decree, as he had intended, he compromised with the Coalition whose leaders pledged electoral reform, and then sabotaged it. As far as essentials went everything remained as it had been before. Only another opportunity was missed—but one more or less hardly seemed to count.

From the early nineties, when Taaffe first suggested and bungled it, universal suffrage had been one of the stock remedies of those who saw in the consolidation of imperial power the only chance of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy for survival. The Crown's alliance with the masses against recalcitrant cliques was an ancient recipe, lately applied with much success by Bismarck. In Austria, but even more in Hungary, where the particularistic anti-dynastic interests were always also anti-democratic, the scheme seemed especially promising; but the intransigeant will to put it into effect was wanting. In Austria the reform was enacted when it was too late to check the whirlwind advance of radical Czech separatism; in Hungary it was never enacted at all.

III

Throughout his long reign Francis Joseph resisted political innovation to the last ditch. A true Habsburg, he always yielded when it was too late, always with bad grace, always with mental reservations. Unwilling to follow Fate's lead he was dragged along.

There was one domain, however, where he could block the intrusion of the new things he hated. It was his private life. There was no bathroom in the imperial

apartments in the Hofburg, in Schönbrunn, nor at Ischl. He was born in an age when modern plumbing was unknown. As a young man, whenever he wanted a bath, a large wooden tub was carried into his bedroom by six men. Three men lugged six buckets with hot water, three other men six buckets with cold. They poured the water into the tub, tempered it to need, and the Emperor stepped in and his valet rubbed him down.

That arrangement had been good enough for his grandfather. It had been good enough for him at twenty-five. It was good enough for him at sixty-five. Why shoud he bother with new-fangled English nonsense like enamelled tubs with built-in drains?

He not only never used the telephone himself, but did not tolerate one within a radius of several rooms. An instrument was installed somewhere in a remote antechamber for the use of his aides. He had passed the border line of manhood when the telephone was invented; he refused to make its acquaintance. He had a veritable passion for the telegraph, though, which had become commonplace while he was still a young man. He sent out telegrams by the hundred every day. He wired orders to the departments across the street; inquiries and messages by the dozen to various members of his family. In every imperial residence, including the hunting lodges, there was a special telegraph office for his personal service.

Lifts, too, were taboo. When at the age of eighty-four he had his portrait painted he walked six flights of tall Viennese stairs up to the artist's studio, but declined to use the elevator.

It is recorded, though, that once he took a ride in a motorcar. It was in August, 1906, at Ischl. He did it to please his guest King Edward VII. On his return he

Banquet at the Vienna Court in Honour of Kaiser Wilhelm II, October, 1888

Imperial Banquet Given at Vienna in Honour of the Russian Emperor and Empress in August, 1896

Reduced from "Das Buch Vom Kaiser." M. Herzig

vowed he would never do it again. On another point he was less accommodating. The British King, then engaged on his great scheme of encircling Germany, tried to detach Francis Joseph from the Triple Alliance, but without success.

His aversion to automobiles and lifts was not due to fear, for Francis Joseph, though reluctant to take unnecessary risks, was no coward physically. It was due to his hatred of modern tricks. He insisted that the Archduchesses should dress in styles about thirty years behind the times, with the result that the august ladies became the laughing-stock of Vienna.

In his youth the exaggerated form-fitting uncreased trousers were still worn that are seen on paintings from the period of the Vienna Congress, either tucked into semi-tall riding boots, or else strapped under the shoes. They were so tight that they admitted no underclothes. To the end of his days Francis Joseph wore nothing next to his body but a linen shirt.

He had inherited institutions and fixtures and principles, or else acquired them in his youth. He found them good, and refused to change them. There was the method immemorially Habsburg, of *divide et impera*, of playing off one race of the Empire against the other. Like the wooden bathtub rolled into the bedroom by six flunkeys, an old-fashioned device—but one that worked. Why bother about plumbing and democracy? As long as there was man power available to carry buckets of hot water and to put down rebellion, why tamper with tradition?

IV

As he grew older his aversion grew with the need for change: he resented the clamour for reforms as a personal

affront, not, as in his youth, because he identified himself with every aspect of the existing order but because he perceived in it, with a subtlety otherwise not his, an ultimate hint that he himself should yield his place to younger craft. His attention to detail was unflagging, but the detail itself upon which it was focussed shrank to an ever-smaller compass. In all this Francis Joseph, as he advanced in years toward old age, came to resemble his grandfather Francis more and more. After erring to and fro along manhood's more or less self-blazed ways, the old man now found himself in familiar paths: the paths of his youth. Once it had been the admiring love of the boy that chose a pattern: it was now the hidden flow of psychic currents that wrought a reversal to type.

Nowhere did his antipathy to innovation manifest itself more clearly and more disastrously than in army matters; for whereas in politics he was in the end always bullied into concession, in military affairs his prerogative was absolute, and he did, or refrained from doing, as he liked. He cherished the delusion that he was a born soldier. It is true that he wore military uniform all the time; it is also true that he devoted more than half of his enormous working day to army management. Yet he was no soldier, but a military bureaucrat. He was a living refutation of the saying that genius means infinite capacity for taking pains. Francis Joseph had that capacity to a larger degree than any other mortal: but he took infinite pains with inessentials. He had the minutest knowledge of dress and service regulations, but of the progress of strategy and tactics and military engineering he knew less than the youngest candidate for a captaincy in the general staff. He devoted intense study to the spacing of buttonholes on officers' tunics, not only in the Austrian army, but also in a dozen others where he

held honorary commissions of field marshal or colonel-in-chief—English, Russian, Bavarian, Spanish, Swedish, Saxon, Prussian, Danish, whatnot: he possessed uniforms of each, and followed changes of design with the loving care of a first-class tailor. He had the keenest eye for detecting the tiniest irregularity in the parade turnout of the sixth man in the second rank at a review, but overlooked the invention of the breechloader which beat his army at Königgrätz. He was so engrossed in gunpolish that he had no time for cannon. His firsthand experience of fighting in the Italian campaign of '59, and later the terrible results of '66, instilled in him a genuine hatred of war; there can be no doubt that in the crises that from 1908 to 1913 brought his Empire repeatedly on the verge of armed conflict his influence invariably made for peace; but his pacific inclinations, coupled with his passion for playing at soldiers, did not culminate in the resolve, "I must devise a policy which will eliminate all danger of war," but in a vague notion that the principal purpose of the army was reviews and manœuvres.

His over-emphasis on the personal element played no mean part in the decay of the military standing of the Empire. As he once had told his Premier Count Auersperg, he hated to change; once he got used to faces he was loath to part with them and learn to tolerate new ones. The most important posts in the army—that of the Chief of General Staff above all—were filled by generals who had survived their usefulness by a quarter century. He liked these old men because they did not fret him with demands for reform. In 1906, when the Heir-Apparent, the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, succeeded, after bitter and protracted struggle, in seizing a substantial share of military control, the Austrian army, in human material, in courage, honour, devotion, and dis-

cipline, second to none, was, in leadership and technical equipment, up to the best standards of 1890.

V

He survived them all—friends and enemies and rivals: survived his wife, and his brother Max, and his son Rudolf; survived Schwarzenberg and Bismarck, Kossuth and Mazzini, Napoleon III and William I; survived the Archduke Albrecht and General Benedek. There he stood at the turn of the century, old in years, surely, but remarkably vigorous both of body and mind, incarnate image of the will-to-stay. The bitterest battle of his life was still ahead.

With the Crown Prince's death the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, eldest son of the Emperor's brother Charles Louis, became heir to the throne—heir-presumptive by letter of the law, heir-apparent in reality. Born in 1863, he suffered, as a boy and young man, from an advanced stage of consumption, was, indeed, given up by the physicians as lost; that memory impregnated his mind with a painful sense of not being equal to his fellows, of being ignored and slighted; he felt that people around him expected him to die; he resolved that he was not going to accommodate them, but would become healthy and strong. His consumption was cured, but the attitude lingered: he faced the world in perpetual defiance, and saw enemies in all men who were not proved friends.

The terrific outbreaks of rage to which he was subject in later life may have absorbed the bitterness and misanthropy of his youth, but they were primarily due to another devastating disease whose symptoms first were identified in manhood, and which darkened his mind with fear of eventual insanity or paralysis.

Thus the outstanding traits of his nature were lack of

balance and passionate exaggeration; they struck the first note of fundamental differences from his uncle who was poise and moderation incarnate. Those differences embraced the entire gamut of mentality and behaviour.

Throughout the nineteenth century a type of Habsburg prince evolved along lines definitely laid down by the Emperor Francis, but traceable to the restraint and rationalism which marked the eighteenth. The Emperor Francis's hankering after popularity, and the essential coarseness of his nature, designed what might be called the *petit bourgeois* tradition of majesty. Francis, who issued the watchword: "Let's all talk dialect," who paraded the simplicity of his private life, and capitalized the happy idea, "We are just like other people," was, apart from his consuming hunger for power and his extraordinary shrewdness, a typical Viennese *Spiessbürger*. Behind a willed manner of inaccessibility and Augustan aloofness his grandson Francis Joseph concealed successfully his authentic kinship with this tradition: his middle class mentality and middle class tastes. The vital strength which this, one would almost say artificially bred, type accumulated in the course of three generations is attested by its reaction: Maximilian, dreamer and poet, Rudolf, scientific dilettante and revolutionary, paid to it the passionate homage of revolt.

Francis Ferdinand was as far removed from the pattern as from its negation. He represented something much older and elemental, a reversion to a Habsburg type of bygone days. The century of enlightenment had produced Joseph II, champion of the rights of man; the half-century of restoration created Francis and Francis Joseph, with their tremulous worship of the pale god Status Quo; Francis Ferdinand harked back to the sullen, fanatical, murderous Seventeenth, the century of Counter-

Reformation. His intellect was narrow but keen, though not subtle: a Dominican mind rather than a Jesuit. From his ancestor the Emperor Rudolf II he inherited his gloom and his collector's passion; from Ferdinand II his religious zeal, his cruelty and his indomitable will.

He first came into the limelight through his private affairs. Back in 1894 he met, at the Governor's ball in Prague, the Countess Sophie Chotek, fifth daughter of the many-daughtered Count Bohuslav Chotek, His Majesty's minister successively at Brussels, Dresden, and other courts. The Choteks were not rich, but of ancient lineage—one of the few pure Slav noble houses which survived the massacres and the German "plantation" of the Thirty Years' War. She was not pretty; she was, rather, what is called a "fine woman": tall, strongly built, with an angular, high-boned, strong-willed Slav face, beautiful brown eyes and a massive aureole of light brown hair. Love on first sight. Obstacles—no end of them. Clandestine meetings: she even nursed him in illness. Scandal: vigorously stoked by the Archduchess Isabel who had fondly eyed the heir to the throne as prospective husband of one of her own innumerable daughters. Sophie had been her lady-in-waiting.

A witches' Sabbath of intrigue unloosed. The Emperor foamed with rage: his nephew adamant. He had a backer. A lifetime of disappointment rang in the advice of the Empress Elizabeth: "Don't give it up, Franz. Marry the woman you love, or else you will have ugly children."

Pressure on the Choteks, from all sides: they are fairly flattened, but Sophie holds out. Their Catholic zeal is turned to account: a wrecking crew of Bishops descends, turns on endless hose of eloquence, intimidation: no use. Francis Ferdinand has friends, too: the

Emperor William supports him gallantly; Czar Nicholas puts in a word: no use. Francis Joseph settles down to a daily routine of fits. Family affairs an Augean stable. One Archduke after the other marrying bourgeoises and worse, half a dozen of them renouncing rank, scandal upon scandal (Archduchesses marrying mere counts hardly worth mentioning: they at least make no noise): all this trouble in spite of the iron severity with which he tries to keep house in order. (In spite of, thought he: that it might be *because* never occurred to him.)

Long-drawn battle of wills. But Francis Ferdinand is no Rudolf. He is just as headstrong as the Emperor, and much more violent: also, much younger. He appeals to the Pope. The Pope intervenes. Francis Joseph gives his consent. But not to a marriage of equals: Sophie will be a morganatic wife; she will never be Empress; and her children will be excluded from the succession.

On June 28, 1900, in the presence of all archdukes, ministers, generals, court dignitaries (another little Olmütz: another Miramar) Francis Ferdinand solemnly renounced his (as yet unborn) children's right to the throne. A scene of grandiose gloom: final defeat of an imperial life spent in vindicating Legitimacy. In a voice almost menacingly cold the Emperor reads the declaration; subduedly Francis Ferdinand repeats the oath, hand on crucifix. Tall silver crucifix, produced from imperial treasure vault. The same as stood behind Ferdinand II when he was besieged by Protestant insurgents.

Francis Ferdinand is now free to marry his Countess. But it is plain to everybody—above all, to the ever-distrustful, and now humiliated, Emperor, that the act of renunciation has really solved nothing—has merely

sown the seed of further trouble. The Princess Hohenberg (that is her title now: later promoted to Duchess) is not reconciled to her status, and she rules her husband. A grand day for politicians of various races, sniffing bargains, calculating prices: Francis Ferdinand will be prepared to do something handsome for those who help him, turning his Hohenberg children into full-fledged Habsburgs. Hungarian voices announce that the Hungarian statute book does not know the concept of *Ebenbürtigkeit*, or equal birth. Sophie, it is intimated, will be regarded as Queen in Hungary, whatever she may be in Austria. The Czechs not averse from accepting, eventually, a reward for accepting a Czech Empress.

For Francis Ferdinand no opportunity is too small for a demonstration: Sophie is the wife of the future Emperor. The Duchess has fine qualities: she is energetic and intelligent, and utterly devoted to her husband, with the devotion of a mother and a watchdog combined. But she is tactless. She is not only ambitious, but also vain: ambition would wait and plan, but vanity forces issues and conquers driblets. Friction is endless, increasing. At court everybody is against her. She is outranked by the youngest archduchess, but she outranks the oldest duchess. The archduchesses say, "Putting on airs? Why, she is not one of us." The women of the high nobility say, "Putting on airs? Why, she is only one of us." She is teased, pinpricked, slighted.

Abroad everything is different. Francis Ferdinand takes her along on representative missions: she is received everywhere as the wife of the future Emperor of Austria —almost as the future Empress. Foremost in gallantry is Kaiser Wilhelm. He knows what Francis Joseph thinks of him, and returns it in kind. He knows of the feud at the Vienna court, and backs the probable winner.

He has the highest opinion of Francis Ferdinand's abilities. Sophie is charmed. Francis Ferdinand is enthused. Francis Joseph is exasperated.

The ringleader of the Duchess-baiters is the Master of the Imperial Household, Prince Montenuovo. Now the mightiest man at court. His mind fertile in devising little insults, if in nothing else. At a court ball the Duchess is left without an escort. Francis Ferdinand's patience snaps. Next day he and his wife leave Vienna with a maximum of ostentation.

The Prince Montenuovo realizes he has gone too far. Calls at the Belvedere Palace to tender his regrets. He is not received. But Francis Ferdinand sends him word to be more careful next time and not to forget that his family name is Neipperg.

That shot went home. For the Prince Montenuovo, stern guardian of Legitimacy, is himself the fruit of the morganatic clause of dynastic law—a by-product, moreover, of the French Revolution. His ancestor was that handsome though one-eyed Count Neipperg whose superior maleness comforted Marie-Louise for the loss of Napoleon.

Montenuovo bit into his lip. "You will pay for this yet."

VI

The marriage with the "Chotek woman" merely precipitated a war of uncle and nephew which would have been inevitable in any event. The classical situation of jealous monarch and impatient heir was here recast into a conflict of intolerable tension and balanced on the edge of disaster by the given characters of the principals.

Fundamentally, it was a difference of temperaments. Both were ardent Catholics; but while Francis Joseph was

merely a precisian, Francis Ferdinand was a fanatic. In politics, Francis Joseph resigned himself to defending the status quo. Francis Ferdinand meant to make tabula rasa. Francis Joseph spent his life in dodging issues. Francis Ferdinand planned to go through the established order as a knife goes through butter on the day of his accession.

Their passion for shooting (the one they shared) brought the difference of their natures into clearest relief. Francis Joseph loved to kill; but he killed strictly in accordance with the rules. He observed closed seasons, spared females as far as possible, and opposed wholesale butchery. He was a sportsman—in sport, at any rate. Francis Ferdinand's idea of sport was massacre. He went in for quantity; he slew any animal, in any place, at any time, by scientific efficiency methods. He was intoxicated by the smell of blood, and delighted in torture. One of his favourite pastimes was to shoot at seagulls gathering around a ship with a small-calibre magazine rifle. But he did not shoot to kill; he tried to wing the birds, and watched their agony.

Francis Ferdinand saw that his uncle's government, with its inane bureaucratic ritual, its concentration on trifles, its makeshifts, and its painful avoidance of radical solutions, was inevitably driving the Empire into ruin. He held that the alternative was complete reorganization or disaster; and he realized that the greatest obstacle to reorganization were the Magyars. As early as in 1895 he told Margutti that the only salvation was federalism—a constitution modelled along the lines of the United States. Margutti objected that as the Magyars would never consent to that, the change could not be brought about by constitutional methods. "Well, by force, then," Francis Ferdinand calmly answered. The Empire, he argued,

was like a patient in extreme danger. An operation was the only hope. Even if operated upon, the patient may die; but there is a chance of recovery, while, if nothing is done, death is certain.

In the course of time he drifted away from federalism and became an adherent of trialism, under which all South Slavs of the Empire, with Croatia and Bosnia as a core, would be united in a kingdom as third partner on equal footing with Austria and Hungary. This arrangement would, first of all, provide a counterweight for Hungary. Moreover, while at present the South Slavs of the monarchy look toward the kingdom of Serbia as the centre of their national hopes, if a Jugoslav state is organized under Habsburg rule the Serbs of the Balkans will be drawn into its orbit, and eventually Serbia will be glad to be incorporated on terms of partnership in a happy and prosperous Empire. Later he extended the same reasoning to the Roumanians, and argued that Transylvania ought to be ceded to Roumania, and then Roumania admitted to the Monarchy as a vassal state, somewhat on the footing of Bavaria within the German Empire.

He realized only too clearly that all these plans would founder on the opposition of the Magyars, and regarded therefore breaking the Magyar oligarchy as the *conditio sine qua non* of imperial regeneration. Hatred of the Magyars grew into a veritable obsession with him. "It was really rather in bad taste for these gentlemen ever to have come to Europe," he once remarked. He could not understand why his uncle stood in such awe of them. "Those Magyars consist of nothing but a moustache," he exclaimed. This champion of seventeenth century Catholic autocracy favoured universal suffrage because he, too, recognized it as the means of destroying the power of the Magyar gentry.

His speculations must have seemed not only rank heresy, but also sheer midsummer madness to Francis Joseph. He feared his nephew; even in the Emperor's presence Francis Ferdinand gave his temper free rein. Some terrible scenes occurred. On one occasion Francis Ferdinand shouted at his uncle: "I have no more influence here than the last porter." "As long as I live no one will meddle with the Government," replied the Emperor, whereupon Francis Ferdinand: "Very well, but it is I who will have to pay for your mistakes." He was the only man who ever shouted at Francis Joseph.

Still the old man held out. With a toughness so absolute that it almost partook of grandeur, impressing the last ounces of his waning strength, he clung to the power which he regarded as his by divine ordinance, and which no usurper could wield with the same wisdom and discretion as he. Twice at least, after 1900, he allowed the thought of retreat, of shifting the intolerable burden on to other shoulders, to flash across his brain. He scotched it. "If I had an heir that I could trust, perhaps —but to this dangerous fool—never!"

At last the Archduke battered down a breach. In 1906 the monarch, yielding to his persistent representations, dismissed the Minister of War, General Pitreich, and the fossilized Chief of the General Staff, Baron Beck, and replaced them with Francis Ferdinand's creatures. From this moment on the Heir-Apparent exercised paramount influence in army matters; he was commander-in-chief in all but name. The doors leading to governmental authority still remained locked—as long as he lived Francis Joseph surrendered the keys to none; but indirectly, by dint of the military organization now under his control, and also of his friendship with the German Emperor on the one hand, and the leaders of the anti-

Magyar and anti-Semitic Christian Socialists on the other, Francis Ferdinand succeeded in annexing political power, all the more dangerous, from the Emperor's point of view, as it was totally irresponsible.

For the time being the Archduke's political influence made itself felt, principally, in a negative, inhibitory sense, as he and the Emperor were constantly at cross-purposes. Thus confusion, instead of being cleared, increased. Francis Ferdinand's adherents, recruited from among the younger element in the army, diplomacy, and political life, made more or less open war on the court, until people began to speak of an invisible government, and the Austria Premier himself, Ernst von Koerber, could exclaim, "Now we have not only three parliaments, but two Emperors as well."

The temperamental differences of uncle and nephew stamped their respective attitudes to foreign policy. Francis Ferdinand advocated radical measures; with the new Chief of Staff, General Conrad, he believed that settling accounts with the nominal ally, Italy, could be a matter of time only, and therefore the sooner it occurred the better: they preached the doctrine of preventive war. Francis Joseph opposed them with Bismarck's saw: a preventive war is like committing suicide for fear of death. He had one desire left: to end his days in peace. His chances for doing so were shrinking daily. Beginning in 1908, when the Foreign Minister Aerenthal, another fresh blood after a procession of dozing mandarins, legalized a *de facto* situation by proclaiming the annexation of Bosnia, the horizon was constantly overcast by war clouds. Russia was vexed; Serbia seething with fury. Then came the Balkan wars. Turkey's phenomenal collapse was generally felt as a disaster for the Austro-Hungarian Empire; that Russian military attaché who

on the evening of the Serbian army's wonderful victory at Kumanovo told the British Colonel Thomson, "This means the end of Austria," voiced a conviction that was gaining ground everywhere. In the second Balkan war Austrian diplomacy once more managed to back the wrong horse: Bulgaria. The Belgrade press now openly preached a holy war on the Habsburg Monarchy; nothing less than the complete destruction of Austria would do; Croatia and Bosnia swarmed with agitators; sedition was rife. In the monarchy itself chronic discontent; the intolerable burden of recurrent war scares, mobilizations, national emergencies made war seem preferable to endless uncertainty. In the West, the Anglo-German rivalry, with King Edward's scheme of isolation now completely successful, projected the European background of the looming struggle.

In this hour of fate the dominant fact of Austrian government was the feud between Schönbrunn and the Belvedere.

VII

There was one man who knew more about the realities of Austrian politics than three generations of Austrian statesmen taken together. His name was Napoleon Bonaparte.

He once said that the South Slav provinces were the most important possession of the Austrian Empire.

He foresaw that Austria would ultimately be ejected from both Italy and Germany, and would be thrown back upon its historic mission, championed by the great Prince Eugene, in the Balkans. And he understood that whether this mission was to be carried out by conquest or by peaceful penetration, the South Slav provinces: Croatia,

Dalmatia, the Austrian littoral, would afford the natural strategic base, political, military, cultural.

Of all this Francis Joseph, after having reigned over Austria for sixty years, knew nothing.

Francis Ferdinand seemed to have an inkling of it.

VIII

On June 28, 1914, the Archduke Francis Ferdinand was to visit the Bosnian capital, and to assume command of the manœuvres held on the Serbian frontier.

The choice of neither time nor place was felicitous. Manœuvres of an Austrian army along the Serbian border could not fail being interpreted as a hostile demonstration. And the twenty-eighth of June was the Vidovdan, the Serb nation's day of mourning: anniversary of the disaster of Kossovo.

Warnings came from all sides: Bosnia honeycombed by a nationalist conspiracy. They were disregarded. There was a bitter feud between the civilian and the military authority. Bilinski, the joint Minister of Finances, also Minister from Bosnia and Herzegovina, was one of Francis Joseph's intimates. Sufficient reason for Francis Ferdinand to keep him in the dark as to his plans. The military governor, General Potiorek, was his man. He was torn between his ambition to be able to report that everything was safe, and his knowledge that this was not so. He had 70,000 soldiers concentrated in the vicinity of Sarajevo; he might have lined the Archduke's route with a cordon six men deep. But he did not mean to. It would not have looked well. During the Emperor's visit in 1910 there was a double cordon of troops; the city swarmed with detectives from Vienna and Budapest who checked every stranger in town, re-

moved the suspicious ones, and tested every detail of an already elaborate espionage organized by the Bosnian police. Hundreds of individuals were forbidden to leave their houses. When from the Archduke's household it was now suggested to import fifty detectives from Budapest, the proposal was shelved on the ground that it would have meant an outlay of about four thousand dollars, and this sum was not available. One of the Archduke's Hungarian adherents, M. Kristoffy, a former Minister of the Interior, described the situation only too accurately when he wrote that when the Emperor had come to Sarajevo there was a detective behind every tree, and when the Archduke came there was an assassin behind every tree.

Whether the official Serbian circles had any foreknowledge of a plot being hatched against the Archduke's life is a controversial point which has not been fully cleared up. That the Government of King Peter did not instigate or abet the conspiracy seems established; that some of its highly placed organs suspected, to say the least, that something was about to happen seems most likely. It is a fact that about June 5th, three weeks before the trip, the Serbian Minister to Vienna, M. Jovan M. Jovanovic went to Bilinski and warned him that the manœuvres along the frontier at this juncture might be interpreted as a provocation in Serbia, especially as the Archduke Francis Ferdinand was generally regarded as an enemy of the Serbs; that there might be some fanatical young nationalist only too willing to fire a shot at the challenger, and that under these circumstances the planned visit was fraught with dangers. Bilinski thanked him for his courtesy. A few days later the Serbian minister was advised that the original arrangements remained unchanged.

Possibly the main reason for the Archduke's rigid insistence on carrying out his programme in spite of the warnings was that this was the first time that on Habsburg territory royal honours were to be paid to the Duchess of Hohenberg. This would also account, partly, for his refusal to deal with the civilian authority; for he controlled the military mechanism and meant to establish an important precedent without Bilinski's meddling.

On the morning of Sunday, June 28th, the Archduke and the Duchess were driving to the town hall of Sarajevo when, from among the crowd lining the street, a bomb was thrown at their car. It missed its aim and exploded further behind, wounding a few spectators and Colonel Merizzi of the Archduke's suite.

The car speeded up. Arriving at the town hall, Francis Ferdinand, crimson with rage, shouted at the Burgomaster: "You swine! We come here as your guests and you have bombs hurled at us! Now hold your damned speech!" The burgomaster quavered an apology. When the reception was over the Archduke announced he wished to see Colonel Merizzi, who had been taken to a hospital. It was decided that they should drive back by a changed route, so as to foil another attempt.

When the procession arrived at the corner of the Francis Joseph Quay where the new itinerary branched off, the burgomaster's car, which drove in front, broke the agreement and continued in the officially scheduled direction. General Potiorek, who rode with the Archduke, immediately stopped the latter's car, and shouted to the chauffeur of Count Waldeck's automobile, close behind, not to follow the burgomaster. At this moment, from the off side of the crowded narrow street, two shots were fired by a young man at close range. One pierced the body of the car and hit the Duchess. She sank

against her husband, lifeless. The second bullet entered the Archduke's throat and tore the jugular vein.

All this took place so quickly that General Potiorek, who sat in the car facing them, but was now talking sideways to the chauffeur in front, did not know that both the Archduke and the Duchess were mortally wounded. He saw the Duchess faint, but thought it was due to the nervous shock. He heard Francis Ferdinand whisper, "Sophie, take care of the children." Already the car was shooting back to the Konak. When, in about three minutes, they arrived, dark blood squirted from the Archduke's mouth; and Potiorek perceived that for the last three minutes he had been riding with two corpses.

Gavril Princip's aim had been perfect. They both died within a few seconds.

IX

By noon the news reached Ischl.

It was broken to the Emperor by the Adjutant-General Count Paar.

When he had finished, Francis Joseph sank back into his chair, as if struck by an electric current. For a time he did not move. His eyes were closed. Suddenly he rose and paced the room up and down, violently agitated. His eyes were rolling now. "Terrible, terrible," he muttered. At last he seemed to have mastered himself, and cried, as if talking to himself:

"The Almighty cannot be defied with impunity! The order which I, alas! haven't had the strength to maintain, has now been restored by the Supreme Will!"

He regarded the tragedy of Sarajevo as Francis Ferdinand's just and deserved punishment for the crime of marrying a woman not of royal blood. He thanked God

as if He were chief of a special police in charge of enforcing the Habsburg House Law.

A terrific blow.

But it relieved him of another embarrassment. The greatest, yet.

He issued orders to return to Schönbrunn on the morrow.

Then, as the official bulletin put it, "he retired to his room and dined alone."

The twenty-eighth of June, 1914, was the fourteenth anniversary of Francis Ferdinand's solemn act of renunciation.

X

And now the grandson of Count Neipperg was to have his say.

The Prince Montenuovo, as Master of the Emperor's Household, took charge of the funeral arrangements.

He was an incomparable expert on the niceties of the Spanish etiquette. His position was simple. He would allow the *protocol* to take its course.

He knew only too well that the *protocol* did not provide for this emergency. The case was unprecedented. There had never, in Habsburg history, been such a thing: the Heir-Apparent and his morganatic wife murdered together.

No precedent? In that case: Francis Ferdinand, who was *not* Crown Prince, had been Inspector-General of the Forces. Entitled to obsequies with the greatest military honours. But the Chotek woman was entitled to nothing of the kind.

Francis Ferdinand's body belonged, by rights, in the vault of the Capuchin Fathers in Vienna. But, aware that he could not share that burial place with his wife, he provided in his will that both should be interred in the chapel at Artstetten.

Very well, then. In that case: Two separate rites. The Chotek woman, straight off to Artstetten. For the Archduke, first a funeral of state in Vienna. Then—he may join his lady.

A wonderful solution. Pity it did not work.

The Prince Montenuovo left one factor out of his calculations. A brand-new factor.

The young Archduke Charles, the murdered prince's nephew, was now Heir-Apparent. He was a harmless, kindly young man. No one took him seriously.

Charles, indeed, was no genius. But he was a Christian, and a gentleman.

His first act as heir to the throne was to thwart Montenuovo's neat little scheme. He declared: One funeral for both.

Very well. Montenuovo put on his *pince-nez* and looked up the *protocol* once more, until he found what he wanted. He announced that a "third class court funeral" was appropriate.

The two coffins arrived at the Southern Terminus at 10 P.M. on July 2nd. Montenuovo had detailed some minor officials to receive them. The minor officials strolled leisurely in, and were dumbfounded to find the Archduke Charles waiting.

The Prince Montenuovo surpassed himself. Two caskets, of different size and ornamentation,were placed in the chapel of the Hofburg. A large and pompous one for the Archduke, bearing his full insignia, on a raised platform. A much plainer and smaller one for the Duchess, on trestles three feet below, with a pair of white gloves and a black fan on top—pointed reminder of her former status of lady-in-waiting at the Archduchess Isabel's court.

Several foreign rulers announced their intention to

attend the funeral. They were informed that the chapel of the Hofburg was very small; besides, the Emperor wished to rest.

There are over one hundred churches in Vienna, and it might have been feasible to find one of convenient size; but the attempt was omitted. The sovereigns expressed regrets, and sent flowers. The Emperor William intimated that he would come, not officially as Emperor, but privately as Francis Ferdinand's friend, without his suite. The Austrian court replied that that was very kind, but that there were a great many assassins at large. Thereupon the Kaiser developed a sudden attack of rheumatism, and stayed at home. Thus a unique opportunity for a great European demonstration—a congress of sovereigns entering solemn protest against murder as a political weapon, and thus indirectly taking sides with Austria—was wasted. But the grandson of Neipperg had his satisfaction.

The chapel where the two bodies lay in state for twenty-four hours was so small that no invitations could be issued, and still less could the people be admitted. So small, indeed, was that chapel that Prince Montenuovo declared the three Hohenberg children had better stay at home too. Once more the Archduke Charles intervened, and two little boys and a little girl were allowed to pray at the bier of their parents.

At ten o'clock at night the coffins were to be taken to the Western Terminus and entrained for Artstetten. A squadron of cavalry, a company of foot guards with glittering halberds. Flunkeys with glaring, smoking, swaying torches. A few carriages. That was all.

But the endless Mariahilfer-Strasse, leading from the Hofburg to the station, was lined with the troops ordered out in the last moment by the Archduke Charles. And

behind the cordon—there had been none like it at Sarajevo—a black wall of two million Viennese. They were not under Montenuovo's jurisdiction.

A dark majestic scene. As the cortège swung around the Bellaria a group of men, in black clothes, moved forward in closed formation, broke through the police lines, and, disregarding the protests of Montenuovo's officials, marched with the procession to the terminus.

Schwarzenberg, Liechtenstein, Starhemberg, Kinsky, Lobkowitz, Fürstenberg, Hohenlohe, Thurn and Taxis, Zichy, Hoyos, and fifty others: flower of the Austrian nobility, gentlemen who had come to pay their last respect to a dead prince who could not defend himself against petty vengeance.

At one o'clock in the morning the funeral train reached the little country station of Pöchlarn. At the moment when the cortège was about to leave a terrific thunderstorn burst over the Danube. Torrents of rain drove everybody into the tiny dark waiting room; in crashes of lightning frightened faces, huddled together around two longish black objects, exchanged quick glances of awful understanding: the heavens were giving their warning of the wrath to come. At last the storm abated, and in the first summer dawn the victims of Sarajevo were borne across the Danube and up the hilly road to Artstetten, where Francis Ferdinand had built his memorial chapel because the wife of his choice was too low-born to rest in the stifling Habsburg vaults of the Capuchin Church in Vienna, next to the Emperor's daughter who married that Count Neipperg who only had one eye but an exceptionally fine pair of calves.

XI

A storm of public indignation condemned the Prince Montenuovo's high-handed management of the funeral

rites. For two days the sixty aristocrats who had defied his meanness were the heroes of Vienna. On July 7th the Emperor, with his small suite, returned to Ischl. Before he left he addressed a letter, in his own hand, to Prince Montenuovo, conveying his full recognition and warm thanks for his excellent and faithful services, and for the care which he had always taken to act in accordance with His Majesty's intentions.

XII

The streets of Vienna and Budapest swelled with cries for revenge. To millions of small existences, stamped a sordid uniform grey by the mills of boredom, debts, taxes, jobs, and disease, destruction of Serbia held out the scarlet hope of release. Greedy thieves of all ages and hysterical women of both sexes smashed and looted little shops owned by Slavonic names. Petty clerks and shopkeepers' sons ran patriotic amuck with pledges to emulate Prince Eugene's celebrated feat by striking a bridge across the Danube and taking for the Emperor the town and fort of Belgrade. The official and semi-official press, manipulated by the dozen men who alone in the hubbub knew what they wanted, let loose from his cage of everyday that noisiest, bloodthirstiest, most unreasonable, most emotional variety of the animal called homo sapiens: the *petit bourgeois* fired by political passion, and he, regrettably justified in worshipping in himself the symbolic hero of the age, mounted the dung-hill of his inhibitions and crowed for sadistic satisfaction. Long before an ultimatum had been sent stories of Serb atrocities were circulated by people whose wish to commit worse fathered the invention.

Apart from a few totally uninfluential liberals and anti-militarists, mute in cloistered studies, there was one man

in the Empire who did not want war. It was the Emperor.

In the days of the Balkan crisis of '13, when a minister, in crown council, glibly proposed that war was the only way out, Francis Joseph, gazing at him coldly over his horn-rimmed spectacles, asked: "Have you ever been through a war? *I* have, and I know what it means."

He wished to end his days in peace: corollary of a life spent in desperate vain struggle to attain static bliss.

His foreign minister Count Berchtold, that living statue of arrogant incompetence, competent only in manipulating a tired old man's will, pulled him toward war. He was seconded by the Austrian Premier Stürgkh, an old-fashioned dry bureaucrat who as good Catholic hated the schismatic Serbs and who, perhaps, like so many of his predecessors, would have welcomed a little war as the solution of an impossible domestic imbroglio. Most of the generals sang in chorus: now is the time to strike. One man sided with the Emperor and peace: Count Stephen Tisza, the Hungarian Premier—a Magyar Calvinist junker, fanatic, cold-blooded, shrewd, sinister—but a man among pigmies. He was no pacifist—far from it; he regarded crushing Serbia as good works; but he held that this was not the right moment, that the diplomatic constellation was unfavourable, the monarchy unprepared; above all, he was afraid of Roumania, on paper a non-resident member of the Triple Alliance, in secret fact a retainer of the Entente: eager to stab Hungary in the back and redeem Transylvania.

Berchtold saw he had to win Tisza; and he saw that he could win him by creating an atmosphere of security. He bargained for assurances of German support. This was not difficult: William of Hohenzollern was easily coaxed into one of his Nibelung moods. On July 6th

The Emperor Francis Joseph and Queen Victoria at Cimiez in March, 1897

Reduced from "Das Buch Vom Kaiser."   M. Herzig

The Emperor Francis Joseph

Painted by Casimir Pochwalski in the autumn of 1900

the Chief of Staff, General Conrad, had an audience with Francis Joseph. He urged war. "But are you sure of German help?" demanded the monarch. Conrad referred to a note despatched to Berlin the night before and proposing just that question. "If the answer is that Germany is on our side, shall we then make war on Serbia?" asked the General. "In that case, yes." Francis Joseph was swerving.

On July 14 came a letter from Wilhelm, offering his aid. Panslav agitation must be checked. New Balkan league under Russian patronage must be combatted. A virtual *carte blanche* for Berchtold.

These exchanges dispelled Tisza's doubts. The last obstacle was cleared. The Cabinet Council of July 19 approved Berchtold's ultimatum to Serbia, to be delivered on July 23 at Belgrade. The Serbian Government was ordered to suppress and condemn all nationalistic anti-Austrian propaganda, arrest everybody incriminated, however remotely, in the Sarajevo murder, and start a judicial inquiry. It was further demanded that Austrian officials should be allowed to participate both in this inquiry and in the suppression of propaganda. In other words, a surrender of Serbia's sovereignty. A time limit of forty-eight hours was set. "No negotiations—unconditional acceptance alone will do," was Berchtold's instruction to his envoy at Belgrade, Baron Giesl.

In those forty-eight hours Count Berchtold trembled that Serbia might, after and in spite of all, accept his unacceptable terms.

XIII

A yellow, two-storied, smallish château—a biggish villa, if you will,—architecturally distinguished by nothing

save its total lack of distinction: such was the Imperial summer residence in the grounds of the Estate of Jainz at Ischl. Superb grounds. Situated on a plateau topping a wooded hill, it is entered from a plaza fading imperceptibly into an heroic vista lined with pine, spruce, and larch, and losing itself, up miles and miles of gently swelling green slope and across a sudden ridge into infinite space. It stands in the very centre of a far-flung circular range of the Alps whose snow-bedecked peaks crown rugged walls of grey and russet rock jutting out perpendicularly from dark massive throngs of firwood. As far as the eye can see Imperial property everywhere—for centuries the favourite shooting preserve of the Habsburgs, paradise and mortuary of chamois and stag.

In these latter days mortuary rather than paradise. The corridors and staircases of the villa are plastered over with thousands and thousands of antlers and skulls, neatly mounted, tagged, and dated, telling with dry precision the story of a life which knew as its only relaxation and indulgence the death struggle of gentle-eyed ruminants. Of chamois alone there are over 2200 heads, all shot by Francis Joseph in the Ischl district in a period covering sixty-five years: sublimated version of a Dyak chieftain's ghastly assortment of souvenirs.

Most of the furnishings are still as they were in the days of the Emperor's mother—nondescript, heavy, combining lavish ugliness of design with the achievable maximum of discomfort: quintessence of mid-Victorian German solidity. From a large salon with prodigious parquet floor, populated by an unhappy tribe of tall slim straight-backed chairs, a small chapel is entered: in it a silk handkerchief, yellow with age, framed: Elizabeth carried it at her wedding. Underneath a small pillow in a glass case. It supported her head on that

last brief journey by improvised stretcher from the boat to the Hotel Beau Rivage in Geneva.

The Emperor occupies the East wing. It is entered through a small smoking room. On the wall the antlers of the last roebuck and the last chamois shot by the all-highest hands—the chamois is dated September 4, 1911. Francis Joseph at eighty-one was still good for the two or three hours' stiff mountain-climbing which is the ransom of a chamois' life. In the corner stands an ancient music box, the shape of a miniature wine cask. If it were ever played it could still play the plaintive little old-fashioned gavottes and Biedermeir waltzes which once delighted a tender-hearted little boy called Max. But it is never played.

The Emperor's study: there is no view. A small window gives on a massive wall of dark thuya trees through which one feels rather than glimpses the glamour of the mountain world beyond. All other rooms in the house command glorious flights into the cærulean infinite. . . . In the Hofburg, too, the imperial suite faces the dull grey barracks yard of the Franzensplatz, though the state apartments of the west wing, reserved for visiting sovereigns, overlook the vast expanse of the Square of Heroes, in sheer spacial magnificence surpassed by no metropolitan site in the world. There is an agoraphobia not of the nerves but of the soul of which Francis Joseph must have suffered: free horizons oppressed him.

A snug middle-class householder's den, utterly German, with an aura of tchibouk and tasseled knitted cap. The very marble bust of the Empress which adorns the desk is, in a slightly reduced version, a standard complement of the comfortable Vienna burgher's home.

Military pictures on the wall—just as in the Kanzlertrakt in Vienna. The storming of Düppel, in the

Slesvig war: a square of fusiliers braving a charge: a patrol of hussars partaking of liquid refreshment in the saddle outside an inn: the colours of the Deutschmeister regiment. The common denominator: all uniforms antedate 1866. The same as in the Hofburg. Francis Joseph's dreams of a golden age never crossed the shadow line of Königgrätz.

A watercolour view of the Hentzi monument in St. George's Square, Budapest. Hentzi was the general who in 1849 fell sword in hand defending the Hungarian capital against Kossuth's rebels. To the Magyars the name of Hentzi had ever been a red rag. The very monument portrayed in the watercolour was the butt of ceaseless riots until the Government caused its removal. In the Hofburg a large canvas representing Hentzi's death in the breach of the fortress of Buda faced Francis Joseph's bed. Every morning, as soon as he opened his eyes, he was reminded that the Magyars were rebels who habitually killed his devoted heroic generals.

A small table, with double glass plate top: enclosing a collection of dried quatrefoils. Twoscore at least. Madame Schratt's gift. Supposed to bring luck.

Six o'clock in the afternoon: July 25th, 1914. The Emperor is seated at his desk: a plain severe mahogany piece in the classic style of the Napoleonic period. The door opens, noiseless: it is Major-General Margutti, with a slip of paper. Briskly the monarch rises, his mien a troubled query. At five, an hour earlier, the forty-eight hours granted to Serbia were up.

Margutti, out of breath with hurry, repeats the message just telephoned from the War Office in Vienna: the Serbian Government's reply was received at Belgrade, and Baron Giesl, finding it unsatisfactory, left Serbian territory at once and crossed over to Hungary with his staff.

The Emperor listened with his eyes opened wide. "It has come at last," he said in a voice stifled with emotion. He took the paper on which Margutti had written out the message, relapsed into his chair, adjusted his spectacles and read. Once, twice, many times. The paper shivered in his old fingers; he still sat there, gazing fixedly at those fateful few words. What vistas must have opened up to his mind's eyes between those three or four lines! He put down the slip and sat absorbed in thought until a clear sharp sound roused him: the two rings on the fourth finger of his right hand hit against a small glass tray on the desk. He leaped up.

"But the break of diplomatic relations does not inevitably mean war!" he exclaimed.

XIV

Two days later, on July 27th, Count Berchtold submitted to the Emperor the draft of the declaration of war on Serbia. It was accompanied by a memorandum in which the Foreign Minister explained that the reply of the Serbian Government to the ultimatum had been quite accommodating as to form, but wholly worthless as to contents. Still he considered that the Triple Entente might make another attempt at mediation, "unless a clear situation was brought about by the declaration of war." He then went on to say that according to a report from the 4th (Budapest) Army Corps Command Serbian troops had on the preceding day opened fire from Danube steamers on Austro-Hungarian troops, and as thus hostilities had actually started, it seemed imperative "to secure for the army that freedom of movement which under international law it enjoys only at the actual commencement of a state of war."

The draft of the declaration of war itself, as sub-

mitted to the Emperor, stated that the Austro-Hungarian Government found itself compelled to resort to the force of arms, "all the more as Serbian troops have already attacked a detachment of the Imperial and Royal Army at Temes-Kubin."

On July 28th Francis Joseph signed the declaration of war. It was immediately forwarded by Count Berchtold to Belgrade. Immediately—but with a slight amendment: not in the wording to which the Emperor had appended his name. On July 29—twenty-four hours later—Count Berchtold addressed a memorandum to the Emperor.

> "As the news of the battle of Temes-Kubin," he wrote, "has not been confirmed . . . in anticipation of Your Majesty's subsequent approval I have taken it on myself to eliminate from the declaration of war . . . the sentence referring to the attack of Serbian troops at Temes-Kubin."

The news of the Serbian attack at Temes-Kubin was not confirmed for the excellent reason that such an attack had never taken place. It was invented by Count Berchtold for the purpose of inducing Francis Joseph to sign the declaration of war without fuss.

XV

As to the only possible outcome he had no illusions.

"If the Monarchy must go down, let's go down in honour," he said to Conrad on the eve of the fighting.

When the Adjutant-General Count Paar reported the British declaration of war on Germany, Francis Joseph exclaimed: "The game is lost. We are no match for England."

From this moment the conviction possessed him that the gigantic drama could only end in the complete ruin of the Central Powers.

Why did he, then, who had willed the peace and foresaw defeat, allow the war to go on, why did he permit millions of his subjects to perish miserably and to no purpose? Because he still worshipped the idol of dynastic and military honour on whose altar he had sacrificed Benedek's army.

Because it was easier to let things drift than to stop things; because he was in mortal fear of his Prussian allies.

He dragged his weary body toward the grave well knowing that his proud Empire was fighting not for its life but for a brief stay of the death sentence.

He was too old. And not only that he was too old—but he also knew that he was. All his life he possessed that happy regal faculty of admitting only convenient facts to his mental presence; and the very realization of his decay proved that his spirit was crumbling. He still clung desperately to the external routine of his fourteen-hour workday; but it was like hugging to his slackening heart the empty shell of what had once been his life.

XVI

And now that the end was near, and known to be near, the sins of the past rose, crowded to his window, and stared and grinned at him. His foreign minister Berchtold declared war on Serbia against his will. Wasn't that Fate's ironic reminder that once when he was young he allowed his foreign minister Buol to learn from the morning paper that war had been declared on Sardinia?

Had he, in 1859, sacrificed Lombardy rather than concede to the King of Prussia, for his offered help, the title—the mere title!—of hereditary High Constable—*Erzfeldherr*—of the German Confederation? Well, in September, 1916, he turned over the command of his own army to the grandson of that Prussian king, to the un-

speakable parvenu William. Had he denied his son Rudolf and his nephew Francis Ferdinand a share in government? Now there sat Prussian officers in every department, and the Empire was in reality run by the German General Staff.

He cherished no delusions about Italy. He had never trusted her as an ally. He hoped, though, that Italy would stay neutral.

> "She depends for her coal and iron entirely on imports," he remarked, "and with her tremendous coast line she cannot defy England. We might as well expect the moon to fight for us. For the moment the best we can expect is her neutrality. For the moment: if our fortunes decline she will not hesitate to go over to our enemies. It won't be very chivalrous, but it will be profitable."

So Nicholas I of Russia had hoped for *his* neutrality in 1854. And after all Italy was under no such obligation to Austria as he had been to the Czar who saved his throne.

"If you join my enemies," Nicholas had written, "you will call down terrible disasters on your Empire."

Francis Joseph did not share his subjects' moral indignation over Italian treachery.

XVII

The malignant wit of the Viennese circulated mean little stories portraying him as a doting old fool who did not know any more what was going on, who confused epochs and persons and issues. When, some months after the outbreak of the war, the Galician fortress Przemysl was taken, his generals and ministers (so the wags asserted) decided it was time to break the news to him.

So an aide went in and began: "Your Majesty, I regret to have to tell you that we are at war." "Oh yes, yes," he was supposed to mutter, "those nasty Prussians—I never trusted them." "Beg your Majesty's pardon—it isn't the Prussians we are fighting, but the Russians. The Prussians are our allies." "They are—are they, what?" "And they have just taken Przemysl." "Oh dear, oh dear—that stupid fool Benedek—I never trusted *him* either." The general who lost Przemysl was Kuzmanek: Francis Joseph (there was a grain of wicked intuition in the joke) was supposed to dream himself back in the days before Königgrätz, and to be unconscious of the blows of the present.

Fate showed him no such mercy. There he stood, eighty-four, eighty-five, eighty-six—: sole survivor of his generation, his friends, his family, there he stood on the solitary rock of majesty, all but awash with the tide of war and revolt. . . . His will was paralyzed; but his judgment remained clear. In July, 1916, when his former minister, Ernst von Plener, talked with him for the last time, he displayed remarkable acumen; he was informed of everything, about the desertion of Czech regiments, about the separatist movement, about the military situation. He was worried about the misfortunes in the field; he spoke of errors and blunders, but in the tones of the aloof observer and critic, without realizing that his decision might have prevented the mistakes and given events a different course. Old age lifted him off the plane of reality: he still had insight, but no more will to action; his spirit was not broken but wearied: *senectus lassae aetatis non fractae nomen est.*[1]

He saw the impending doom: even as a man, tied on to the rails, watches the approach of an express train.

[1] Seneca ad Lucilium, Ep., 26.

XVIII

In the first days of November, 1916, he fell ill with bronchitis. His physician Dr. Kerzl summoned specialists; but despite the threatening symptoms of pneumonia they could not persuade the Emperor to stay in bed. Tormented by cough and fever, he sat at his desk and worked.

On November 19th he asked for the sacraments. When they had been administered he returned to his desk and worked. He worked as usual till four o'clock on the afternoon of Tuesday the 21st—and then he felt his time was up. Straining the last of his ebbing strength he signed another paper, then put the pen away, rested his face on his left palm, and prayed softly.

His physicians urged him to retire to his bedroom, but he refused to go. His faint lasted a few minutes—then he pulled himself together, and tried to work. Work, work—though his eyes were growing dim and his ears rang with sounds that were not of this world, he still worked. Lonely old man wrestling with death over a desk.

About seven o'clock he fainted again. Professor Ortner found that the inflammation had spread to both lungs. All hope was gone. The Emperor, now unconscious, was taken to his bed. He came to for a moment; then he fell asleep.

The archdukes and archduchesses were called. At eight o'clock the Heir-Apparent, Archduke Charles, arrived—an urgent telegram had summoned him from the front, and he travelled twenty-four hours. The whole imperial family now was admitted for a few minutes to the Emperor's bedroom. Between spells of heavy marasmic sleep he faintly half-smiled at them; speak he could no

more. They withdrew to the adjoining salon; and now Mme. Schratt appeared in the door. The Archduchess Marie Valerie, the Emperor's daughter, who happened to stand by, turned her back on her, and a court official, thus encouraged, brusquely asked her to be gone. With tears in her eyes the Emperor's only friend and comrade made ready to leave, when a young man in a general's uniform stepped to her and offered his arm. It was Charles—Archduke as yet, in a few minutes Emperor. Archduchesses and flunkeys fell back grimly as the Heir-Apparent gently escorted the sobbing woman to the dying Emperor's bedside.

An attempt to offer him the last solaces of the Church was acknowledged by a feeble nod. At five minutes past nine Francis Joseph fell asleep, and woke no more.

The manner of his passing was the symbol of his life. He died in harness.

XIX

Before they laid him to rest, next to his ancestors, in the vault of the Capuchin Fathers, his body was embalmed. The physicians tried a new and commended method. They injected paraffin into the veins. The experiment went wrong. The whole body swelled, and the face was puffed up beyond recognition.

In his very death Francis Joseph remained true to himself. Even his stark defenceless body resisted innovation. And when innovation had done with him, the thing it conquered was not like Francis Joseph any more.

It was the first reform under the reign of Charles the Last.

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